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EDITOR: H. D. A. MA

OXFORD CONFERENC

The Ninth Conference of Moderr
The Editor.
Introductory Address ..
Professor P. Gardner, D.Litt.
The Evolution of Religion
Professor F. B. Jevons, D.Li
Early Christian Universalism
J. M. Creed, M.A.
Primitive Christianity and i
C. W. Emmet, B.D.
Christianity and the West
L. Dougall.
Christianity and the Primitive
H. J. D. Astley, Litt.D.
Christianity and the East ..
Professor A. G. Widgery.
The Finality of Christianity ..
Professor W. R. Matthews, D.D.
Christianity and the Future ..
W. B. Selbie, D.D.
Mohammedanism. R. F. McNeile,
Buddhism. Professor W. E. Sooth
Hinduism. Edwin Greaves
The Love of God .. ..
R. H. Charles, D.D., Litt.D., I
The Outlook. J. C. Hardwick, M

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Australia—A. McCubbin & C
New Zealand—Walter Na

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THE
MODERN CHURCHMAN

By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus.*

A State without the means of change is without the means of its conservation.—*Edmund Burke.*

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THE NINTH CONFERENCE OF MODERN CHURCHMEN

By the Editor.

THE ninth annual Conference of Modern Churchmen held on August 22—28, 1922, at Somerville College, Oxford, took for its theme 'Christianity as the World Religion.'

Adequate treatment of so vast a subject was of course impossible; only certain aspects of it could be dealt with, and those only in a summary manner. The papers composed for this purpose are published in this number of the *Modern Churchman*. These papers were supplemented by a number of able addresses and speeches. The contributions of Mr. Clutton Brock, Miss Royden, Mr. G. R. S. Mead (the editor of *The Quest*), Dr. Vernon Bartlett, Dean Rashdall and Sir William Ashley, will not quickly be forgotten—but it is not within our province to publish them. Freedom of discussion in these matters is best secured by the exclusion of the press.

The papers published evoked general agreement, although as was natural, certain statements in some of them came in for criticism. This was particularly the case with Professor Widgery's paper, largely due, we believe, to misunderstanding.

The use of the phrase 'evolution of religion' in the paper of Dr. Jevons, was taken exception to. It seemed to its critics to deny 'Divine Revelation.' Of course it really did nothing of the kind—any more than the term 'the evolution of life' denies the creative energy of God. Religious evolution is a scientific term and describes religion from the anthropological and historical standpoint: Divine Revelation is a theological term and

describes religion from the standpoint of one who regards religion as the self-disclosure to man of a Divine Personality. When this is recognized the old distinction between Natural Religion and Revealed Religion disappears. All religion viewed from the scientific standpoint is *natural*: all religion viewed from the standpoint of a personal and self-communicating God is *revealed*. A change in our view of the *method* of the Divine Revelation to humanity is really the cause of the disappearance for us of the old distinction between *natural* and *revealed*.

The modern view, if we may so name it, is unable to recognize any valid difference between the *method* by which God made Himself known, for instance, to the Greeks, and that in which He made Himself known to the Hebrews. In each case the revealing agent was the Divine Word operating through human personality, in accordance with psychological laws which at present we but very dimly understand. We admit of course a difference in the *degree* of the Divine Revelation made to the Jews, and that made to the Greeks. The perfection and fullness of the Divine Revelation made in Jesus Christ to the Jews was not reached in the case of Socrates and Plato among the Greeks. This modern view of Divine Revelation is set forth in a way with which the present writer feels himself to be in entire agreement in Canon J. M. Wilson's essay, 'The Idea of Revelation, in the Light of Modern Knowledge and Research,' in the *Cambridge Theological Essays* (1905). There Canon Wilson contrasts and compares the two conceptions of revelation as follows:

> 'There are two ways of throwing into a systematic form our imaginations respecting the universe.
>
> 'We may, on the one hand, regard it as essentially one continuous whole, in which, from hidden sources of life within, which we call Divine, mysterious and ordered movements spring up, progressing towards some remote end. Such a development in the spheres of matter and of physical life is popularly called Evolution; in that of the intellect it is called Knowledge; and in the realm of conscience and will it may be called Revelation, though perhaps there is no real distinction. Revelation, from this point of view, is regarded as the growth or evolution of the Divine Life, and of the knowledge of its own nature, in the human race. The earth has been slowly turning to the sun.
>
> 'On the other hand, we may think of this phenomenal world and of the Personality of God, as of two things apart, objective to each other, external to each other. From this point of view Revelation is regarded as a history of God's successive gifts *ab extra* to man whom

He created; and in particular the word is associated with His gradual enlightenment of man in consciousness of Himself. First individuals, then a family, then a nation, and then a Church, are the Divinely selected channels and depositaries of God's revelation to man in the past. That Revelation reached its climax, if not its completion, in the manifestation of God in Christ. That is the other way of regarding the facts. The sun has been slowly rising on the earth.

'These two ideas of revelation are clearly distinguishable, though they have very much in common; and the change in the modern thought of revelation that must be first explained is the substitution of the first for the second. Whether they are mutually exclusive time may show. But to modern thought the second, as an exclusive or dominant theory, is becoming impossible.'[1]

Auguste Sabatier, in his *Outline of a Philosophy of Religion*, deals with these two conceptions of the Divine method of Revelation, and claims that psychology dissipates the *ab extra* conception of it. He writes:

'If revealers and prophets believed they heard the voice of God outside themselves, they were the victims of a psychological illusion that analysis discerns and dissipates. There is no faith save in the heart where God has first made Himself heard; and there are no divine words except those which faith itself hears in the sanctuary of the soul.'[2]

When once this theory of the subjective or psychological method of Divine Revelation is grasped and accepted—we really ought not to call it modern, for it seems to have been that of the Prologue of the Fourth Gospel—all the religions of mankind are seen in their right relation to the Christian religion. This relation is not that of the false to the true, nor that of the human to the divine, but that of the partial to the perfect. By perfect is not meant incapable of expansion, or incapable of manifold application, but containing all the essentials of moral and spiritual religion, and in the case of our Lord's religion as presented by Himself—excluding and rejecting all those non-essentials of religion which so many of His predecessors, contemporaries, and followers, have regarded as essentials.

A question connected with the foregoing, but mainly arising out of Dr. Astley's paper, was whether, and in what way, Christian missionaries seeking to convert primitive races, whose religion is largely animistic or polytheistic, should make concessions to their undeveloped religious and moral condition. Some felt the dangers of concession to be very great. The true solution seems to be that the Christian missionary cannot

[1] *Op. cit.*, p. 224-5. [2] *Op. cit.*, p. 54-5.

teach any doctrine of God which is not really and truly Christian: he cannot, for instance, present God as anything else but the perfectly good, loving, holy Father of men made known supremely in the personality of Christ: neither can the missionary teach that God requires less from His children than that they should strive to obey Christ's teaching. On the other hand, it would be absurd to teach some complicated metaphysical doctrine of God to a primitive people, and to discuss 'the counsels of perfection' in Christ's Sermon on the Mount before the converts had shown some power to advance in the more obvious moral practice. At the same time, it seemed clear that these primitive peoples should be taught to think of their own religion, not as false, but as imperfect, and as the divine preparation for their reception of the religion of Christ. Also it seemed clear that the Christian missionary should as far as possible draw on his converts' sacred literature and devotional language for the purposes of religious instruction and worship, and allow the converts to use those forms of divine worship to which they have been accustomed, and to retain their inherited social organization and ancient customs except when they are positively hostile to Christian ideals and the formation of the Christian character. Surely there are forms of reverence for his ancestors which a Christian Chinaman ought to be able to practise without this being detrimental to his worship of the Father of all men.

But these and other matters which came up in discussion were subsidiary in the minds of many to that great underlying question which the Conference was primarily intended to discuss. What prospect is there of the Christian religion becoming the religion of humanity? Will it ever become so by the use of its present methods of propaganda? Are any of the existing forms, in which we know Christianity, destined to become universal, e.g. Romanism, Quakerism, Unitarianism, Continental Protestantism, Greek Orthodoxy, Anglicanism?

Without claiming to present the answer which the careful reader can glean for himself from the perusal of the Conference papers, it will not be amiss to state succinctly some of the issues involved in that answer.

The late Professor Max Müller called the Christian religion

'the Religion of Humanity.' It was a significant title coming from one who had been a life-long student of religion, and in particular of the religions of the East, which not a few regard as the equals, if not the superiors, of the Christian religion. Max Müller's claim for the Christian religion was of course no new one. It is as old as Christianity itself. Whether Christ intended to found the Catholic Church may be reasonably doubted on the basis of our historic records, but His invitation:

> 'Come unto Me all ye who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls'

suggests neither national nor temporal limitations for a company, the members of which should find their unity not in the rites and regulations of a definite organization, but in their personal relation to Him, their Saviour. The religion of Christian experience has shown itself to be universal. No one can conceive of the Beatitudes as being true for Englishmen but not for Chinamen, or valid in the first century but invalid in the twentieth. The Lord's Prayer is as helpful and needful for the Esquimau as for the English University professor. The Gospel, at any rate, is Catholic, but what about the Church?

The title 'Catholic' has been applied to the Christian Church ever since St. Ignatius, about 110 A.D., wrote to the Smyrnæans:

> 'Wheresoever the bishop appears, there let the people be, even as wheresoever Christ Jesus is, there is the Catholic Church' (ch. viii).

In this passage the word 'Catholic' means 'universal' in contrast to 'local,' although later on it was narrowed down into meaning 'orthodox' in contrast to 'heretical.' But the Church's claim to be Catholic goes back behind this first known use of the title to St. Paul's so-called *Epistle to the Ephesians*, really a circular letter addressed by the apostle to the Christian Churches in the Roman province of Asia about the year 62 A.D. In that document may be read the charter of the Church's Catholicity in letters so large that he who runs may read. There we have presented a Divine Society in which it is the Divine Will that all humanity shall be united on an equal footing under the Headship of Christ, who has been the means of breaking down the 'middle wall of partition' which had hitherto separated nationalities and religions—a society in which 'bar-

barian, Scythian, bond, and free' shall enjoy equal spiritual privileges with the Jew.

This unity of all mankind in Christ, as Dean Armitage Robinson points out in his invaluable commentary on the *Ephesians*, is of a very striking kind. It is unity in one body, yet is it unity in diversity, because it is primarily a unity of the Spirit—the Spirit being that of Christ, the Head of the Church—and it is also in its final, not in its initial stage, an intellectual unity as well.

Although nearly 1900 years have passed since St. Paul presented his great ideal of human unity, humanity seems almost as much divided to-day as it was then. Is it possible that the apostle mistook the eternal purpose of God? May it not be that the Creator is as much opposed to unity as He is to uniformity? Are not human strifes and divisions in accordance with His plan for humanity? The ancient Hebrew chanted: 'Yahweh is a man of war' was he not right? Are not national rivalries, and class wars, and grinding competition the effective factors in human evolution? Is not the Pauline ideal of an all-embracing human society based on Christian love a dream of degenerates, and slaves, and obscurantists? Is not the endeavour to realise it to contend against the cosmic process as revealed by our biologists? Nietzsche thought so. Huxley, who was as well acquainted with biological laws as was Nietzsche, declared decisively that biological laws furnished no moral ideal for the future progress of mankind, and announced in his famous Romanes Lecture:

> 'That the ethical progress of society depends, not on imitating the cosmic process, still less in running away from it, but in combating it.'[4]

Most modern thinkers to-day recognize Huxley to have been right and Nietzsche wrong. Man in his progress has left the biological stage of creative evolution behind. He is no mere biological organism: he is a conscious organism, a personality. His progress henceforth is not dependent, so far as his higher life is concerned, on sole obedience to biological laws, any more than his biological evolution was dependent upon sole obedience to the mechanistic laws of the pre-biological stage of existence. Man subsumes in himself all the stages, mechanistic and biological, of the creative process, but he transcends them, for

[3] Cf. *op. cit.*, p. 99-100.

[4] *Romanes Lecture*, p. 34.

he himself is more than a mechanism, and more than a biological organism, since he is a personality. Henceforth the laws of his progress are the laws of a personality, namely, rational, moral and spiritual laws. When this is grasped, the absurdity of directing our personal and social life after the pattern of biological processes becomes evident. It is an attempt to put the clock of the creative process back, for as Dr. J. S. Haldane points out, that in the light of our present knowledge:

> 'The logic of the universe is the logic of personality. . . Personality is the great central fact of the universe. This world, with all that lies within it, is a spiritual world.'[5]

In the light of this knowledge, St. Paul's ideal can be demonstrated to be in harmony with the evolutionary process. It is an intelligent anticipation of it, unless we prefer to call it a divinely inspired prophecy. St. Paul saw in Christ the whole creative process consummated,[6] the creative ideal attained, and the Church brought into existence in order to become the organ by which this process was to be made effective for the rest of mankind.

Mankind, however, are not disposed even when they desire human unity—a great cosmopolitan society—to turn to the Pauline method of achieving it. The cultivation of political alliances and economic relations seems to promise more in that direction than does the Church. This is not surprising, for reasons which we shall indicate. Nevertheless, it must be becoming clearer to many to-day that a would-be universal human society, whatever its promise and potency, is quickly doomed to fall into disorder and distress, when it aims simply at materialistic goods, puts its faith in secularist methods, and appeals to utilitarian sanctions. Our great political congresses, whether of Vienna or Versailles, our socialist internationals have failed because they would not build on spiritual foundations.

Guiseppe Mazzini, that true prophet of democracy, beside whom Karl Marx paled into ignoble fatuity, even before the days of the red ruin wrought by Russian Bolshevism, in his *Letter to the Italian Working Class* warned them in memorable words against the twin snares of Machiavellism and Materialism.

[5] *Mechanism, Life and Personality*, by J. S. Haldane, F.R.S., pp. 133, 139.
[6] *Cf.* the ἀνακεφαλαίωσις of St. Paul, and the *recapitulatio* of St. Irenaeus.

> 'The first, a mean travesty of the doctrine of a great but unhappy man, leads you away from love and from the frank, bold, and loyal adoration of truth; the second precipitates you, through the worship of *self-interest,* into egoism and anarchy. If you would withdraw yourselves from beneath the arbitrary rule and tyranny of men, you must adore God. . . . And because these two lies present themselves to you too often in seductive guise, and with the allurement of hopes which only the worship of God and of Truth can convert into *facts,* I have felt myself obliged to warn you . . . My voice may seem harsh and too insistent in teaching you the necessity of sacrifice and virtue towards others. But I know you will understand . . . that every *right* you can have, can only spring from a *duty* fulfilled.'

The leaders of the working class paid as little practical attention to Mazzini's prophetic utterances as did the statesmen and ecclesiastics of Europe. Building on spiritual foundations is for those who begin it no very paying proposition. Large profits and quick returns for ourselves are secured by building on materialistic foundations, and our opportunists have always held that it was the duty of the future to look after itself, and not their duty to do it. That is the reason why St. Paul's ideal of human unity does not get forward. It is not due to any defect in the Pauline ideal. It is due really to two things, (1) the inherent difficulty of the task, caused by the ape and tiger in human nature, as well as by what Bishop Creighton called 'the primitive donkey,' which is only very slowly worked out, and (2) the disloyalty of the historic Church to the Divine Ideal.

If it be asked: Why have not the world's kings and statesmen striven to secure human unity by means of the Church?' it must be replied that this is not due merely to the original sin in kings and statesmen, but to the impossibility of using the Church to secure this end. Had the Church been faithful to its Head it would have been possible to use it as a means for securing human unity. The attempt, we know, has been made on several historic occasions, notably in the Holy Roman Church and Holy Roman Empire experiment of the Middle Ages, but the disloyalty of the Church has been the cause of its failure. It has exchanged a moral and spiritual ideal for an ecclesiastical, political and financial one. Bishop Lightfoot, in the opening paragraphs of his *Essay on the Christian Ministry,* thus outlines the ideal of the Church.

> 'The Kingdom of Christ, not being a kingdom of this world, is not limited to the restrictions which fetter other societies, political or religious. It is in the fullest sense free, comprehensive, universal.

> It displays this character, not only in the acceptance of all comers who seek admission, irrespective of race or caste or sex, but also in the instruction and treatment of those who are already its members. It has no sacred days or seasons, no special sanctuaries, because every time and every place alike are holy. Above all, it has no sacerdotal system. . . . Each individual member holds personal communion with the Divine Head. To Him immediately he is responsible, and from Him directly he obtains pardon and draws strength. . . . The "ethical principle" of the Gospel "is not a code of positive ordinances, but conformity to a perfect exemplar, incorporation into a divine life." This, then, is the Christian ideal; a holy season extending the whole year round—a temple confined only by the limits of the habitable world—a priesthood co-extensive with the human race.'[7]

Had the Christian Church always grasped these fundamental principles of the Christian religion and directed all her policy by them, not only is there good reason for supposing that she would have claimed the love and loyalty of a far larger body of human beings than is the case to-day, but also that kings and statesmen would haved turned to the Church to weld together nation and nation and class and class. The conflicts about dogma and organization, rubric and ritual, which still bitterly divide those who ought to be one, and absorb energies and gifts which should be devoted to Christian service and Christian missions, are the greatest hindrances to the Religion of Christ becoming the religion of humanity. The Christian Church time and again has failed to feel mainly interested in 'the real Christian thing,' namely, the cultivation of the Christian character, and the Christianizing of our educational, social, and political institutions. Its chief interests have been dogmatic, ecclesiastical, and ceremonial, where they have not been political and financial. These the Church has placed first in its policy—and the Spirit of Christ, which is the spirit of love, truth, and freedom in every sphere of life, it has too often treated as comparatively unimportant. Until the Church as a whole recovers the true sense of spiritual and moral values, there is no prospect of its winning the loyalty of the modern Occidental mind or of the rapidly modernizing Oriental mind.

Mazzini's Letter to the Members of the Œcumenical Council of 1870, usually entitled *From the Council to God*, forms a terrible indictment of the largest branch of the Christian Church—but it is true in some measure of all the larger Christian Churches. Over fifty years have passed since its

[7] Lightfoot's *Philippians*, pp. 181-184.

publication, and it would be unfair not to admit that the Church has improved in some directions since then, but Mazzini's Letter still stands as the most comprehensive summary of the reasons for the Church's failure in the modern world. If Martin Luther's ninety-five Theses nailed on the door of the Schloss-Kirche at Wittenberg are the charter of the Protestant Reformation, Mazzini's *From the Council to God* is the charter of the Modernist Movement. No Modernist would undertake to prove all Mazzini's charges or to defend all his phrases, but he would have to confess that the substance of them is true. Mazzini declared that 'the arch of the Christian heaven is too narrow to embrace the earth.' That, he affirmed, was due to

> 'a divorce between faith and science—the two wings given to the creature wherewith to elevate himself towards the Ideal.'

This divorce, he maintained, 'must inevitably result in mental slavery or materialism.' Another cause of the narrowness of the arch of the Christian heaven was due to 'the imprisonment of the Word within an insignificant fraction of time and space,' thus producing a fatal dualism in the Church's interpretation of human history. As a result of the Church lagging behind the best thought of the age, Mazzini declared that 'not a single one of the vast strides made upon the path of progress in our age was either suggested or consecrated by the Church's faith'—he meant, of course, the Roman Church's faith—but it is possible that the charge is true of other Churches as well. The charges of materialism, ecclesiasticism, sectarianism, obscurantism and conventionalism hang over us all. At times the Church has been definitely, almost consciously, disloyal, at other times it has allowed loyalty to the lesser loyalties, 'mint, and anise and cummin' to take the place of loyalty to the greater loyalties, 'righteousness, mercy, and faith.' At the most critical moments in its history, the Church has made loyalty to itself more important than loyalty to Christ. Yet it would be a fatal error—the error of a Protestant individualism—not to insist that there is a love and loyalty due from the individual Christian to the Church. But it is a love and loyalty which is not of the supreme kind. The Church is the Body of Christ, and loyalty must be given to it only in so far as it is loyal to Christ—given to it in order to make the Church the effective organ of the Spirit of Christ.

Sometimes philosophers are able to estimate an ecclesiastical situation better than the ecclesiastics can. Professor Josiah Royce in the concluding chapters of his noble book, *The Problem of Christianity*, published in 1914, says some things about the historical mission of Christianity, and the policy of the Church's leaders which deserve attention. He writes:

> 'Henceforth our religion must more and more learn to look upon the natural world as infinite both in space and in time, and upon the salvation of man as something bound up with the interpretation of an infinitely rich realm of spiritual life,—a realm whose character the legends of early Christian tradition did not portray with literal truth. Therefore if religious insight is indeed to advance, and if the spirit of Christianity is to keep in touch with the growing knowledge of mankind, the Christology of the future cannot permanently retain the traditional forms which have heretofore dominated the history both of dogma and of the visible Christian church.'[8]

He gives two pieces of practical advice. The first is this:

> 'In the past, the teaching of Christian doctrine has generally depended upon some form of Christology. In recent times the traditional problems of Christology have become, in the light of our whole view of the world, of mankind, and of history, increasingly difficult and perplexing. . . . The first of our practical maxims is: *Simplify your traditional Christology, in order thereby to enrich its spirit.*'

This simplification of Christology was attempted at the Cambridge Conference of 1921. It was attempted not on *à priori*, but on historical lines. And it seems to us that while a modern-minded Buddhist, or Mohammedan, or Jew, or Parsi, who was attracted by the moral and spiritual ideals of our Lord, might be won to accept this historical Christology, practical experience has shown that it is almost impossible to win him to accept a Christology of the Byzantine type.

Professor Royce turns from the problem of Christology to the problem of loyalty to the Church, and gives his second piece of practical advice.

> 'My second maxim is this: *Look forward to the human and visible triumph of no form of the Christian Church.* Still less look to any sect, new or old, as the conqueror . . . Judge every social device, every proposed reform, every national, and every local enterprise by the one test: *Does this help towards the coming of the universal community.* If you have a church, judge your own church by this standard, and if your church does not fully meet this standard, aid towards reforming your church accordingly. If, like myself, you hold the true church to be invisible, require all whom you can influence to help to render it visible. To do that, however, does not mean that you shall either conform to the church as it is, or found new sects. . . . Aid towards the coming of the universal community by helping to make the work of religion not only as catholic as is already the true spirit of loyalty, but as inventive of new social arts, as progressive as is now natural science.'[9]

[8] *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 424. [9] *Op. cit.*, Vol. II, p. 430 *f.*

INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS

By Professor P. GARDNER, D.Litt., LL.D., F.B.A., President of the Churchmen's Union.

THERE is one question which lies right across the threshold of our subject—the question what we mean when we speak of Christianity. Undoubtedly there are in the country, and probably among ourselves, very different notions as to what the word implies.

In the Church of England there are, and have long been, three ways of regarding Christianity; ways not in practise rigidly separated, but clearly distinguished in principle. First there is the Christianity of institution and Sacrament; second, there is the Christianity of doctrine; and third, there is what I may venture to call the Christianity of the Spirit.

The institutional Christians refuse to consider any body of men as Christian unless they preserve the episcopal order, and the priesthood, and trust to the sacraments as the way of life. The Christians of doctrine hold that no one can really be a follower of Christ unless he holds certain views as to the nature of God and the divinity of Christ. Of course, I am not going here to attack or to defend such conceptions of Christianity. But I am sure that I may assume that the members of our Conference, even if they incline to one or the other of these views, do not regard it as of such importance as to unchurch and reject all who take another and a broader interpretation of Christianity. The scheme of our Conference implies that we regard Christianity as a thing which changes, save in essential characteristics, with changing conditions, which evolves, which is always learning new truths, which is ready to adopt, if only they can be baptized into the Spirit of Christ, the customs and the ways of thought of many peoples. We do not say, *ubi ecclesia, ibi Christus*, but *ubi Christus, ibi ecclesia.*

It is hard to see how anyone who has studied in a historic spirit the story of the first spread of Christiantiy can take any other view. The *Acts of the Apostles* is by no means a colourless work. Those who have read the second volume of the great work of Foakes Jackson and Lake, in my opinion greatly

superior to the first volume, will realize what very great historic uncertainties hang about the purpose, the composition, and the authorship of the book. But beyond all uncertainties, what becomes clear is the triumphant march of the Spirit of Christ through the Hellenistic world; how the apostles at Jerusalem, and missionaries like Philip and Stephen, and above all St. Paul, were swayed and upborne by a sublime inspiration; how they vanquished and bore down the opposition of men and demons; how wherever they preached churches sprang up; how men forsook for the worship of Christ the synagogues of the Jews, the temples of the gods, and the mystic cults of Asia.

It was the power of the Divine Spirit, the working of the exalted Christ in the Church, which was the great driving power of Christianity. But the spirit acted from within outwards, not from without inwards. The first missionaries did not say, 'unless ye submit yourselves to the Apostles and accept Church discipline, ye cannot be saved'; nor did they say, 'He that would be saved must think thus and thus of the Trinity.' They said very simply, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and ye shall be saved.' This was the first creed of Christianity, and the spirit which worked in the Church produced a multitude of diverse results, among different peoples and in different surroundings. Such diversity we may trace in the very earliest documents of Christianity. In the Gospel according to St. Matthew we see a wonderful translation and exaltation of the Jewish religion, the religion of the Prophets, interpreted in the light of the life and death of the Saviour. In the Pauline epistles the same light is brought to bear on the ethics and conditions of the great Hellenistic cities. In the Fourth Gospel, the Ephesian Gospel, we find the mysticism which had become the religion of those who were naturally religious in all eastern countries transposed and newly inspired, baptized into Christ, and made a vehicle of the loftiest Christian belief.

For the next century our historic documents are much less clear and satisfactory. We can but dimly trace the process by which the churches of different cities and countries developed by taking in the national tendencies. We have the Church in Judaea, ascetic, somewhat narrow, developing Judaeo-Christian ethics, still clinging to the belief in a speedy second coming of the Lord, and a reign of the saints on earth. We have the

Church of Antioch, the mother of missions, as she had been the centre from which Hellenistic civilization spread eastwards into Asia. We have the Church of Alexandria, delighting in subtle philosophical distinctions, never tired of discussing phases of doctrine, doing the thinking of the Christian world. We have the Church of Rome, imbibing the old Roman spirit, masterful and intolerant, thinking rather of order and of domination than of spiritual religion. We have the Church in Phrygia, given to mysticism and to enthusiastic revivals of religion. And later we have the Nestorian Church, at one time one of the largest and most learned bodies of Christians in the world, which founded churches all through Asia as far as Pekin; and the great Church of the Arians, to which was largely due the conversion of the northern races, the Goths, Lombards and Burgundians, and which furnished a great part of the martyrs of early Christianity.

We have fallen into a way of merely setting aside the branches which sprang out of the main stem of Christianity as heretical and aberrant. Such a view is in the highest degree superficial and misleading. The main stem or main stems of the Church were more permanent and successful, but the branches also bore flowers and fruit, sometimes fruit of the greatest value to the usefulness of the tree. And in many cases, when the branches were re-absorbed into the stem, they greatly modified it. It was by no means always that the party in the Church which seemed outwardly triumphant had the greatest effect on the future of the growing Church. The niceties of Alexandrian thought were not really understood by the cruder minds of the barbarians of the north. Each country had its own tendencies in monasticism, in government, in religious thought.

But I must not linger over the history of Christianity in the past. We shall have quite enough to do to discuss the working of Christianity in the present. So regarded our subject falls naturally into sections. If Christianity is the universal religion, we must consider its activity and its prospects in all fields. First there is our own country, in which I fear the influence of Christianity is by no means generally dominant, and has rather shrunk than increased in recent years. But the subject which will specially occupy us is our missions in non-Christian coun-

tries. And here there is an obvious and a most essential distinction to be drawn between our missions to countries of old and settled civilization, such as India and China, and the missions to primitive and uncivilized peoples, such as the natives of the South Seas or of Central Africa.

'Physician, heal thyself,' is a phrase which countries like India and China might well apply to England. How can we hope to Christianize other peoples when we are not ourselves Christian? And alas, it is too true that England in some of its most important activities is not Christian. We are no worse than the other countries of Europe, perhaps better than most; but we are far indeed from the Kingdom of God. Of all countries Ireland is most under the influence of Roman Christianity; and I need not dwell upon the state of that most perverse country. Protestant Prussia and Catholic Bavaria have vied one with the other in preaching the gospel of hate. And what can one say of orthodox Russia? No doubt in every country of Europe there are a multitude of men and women who are really Christian in their private lives. But everywhere we find very disquieting symptoms, especially in the growing laxity of family morality, which is the foundation of all morality. The religious papers are full of the decay of public worship, and the growth of the spirit of secularity, which is of all spirits the most bitterly hostile to Christianity. Many teachers of religion are prepared to provide a remedy of their own for the general laxity. I hope that some of our speakers will have such remedies to suggest. But meanwhile the evils persist and are rampant.

We hear from missionaries, alike in more civilized and in less civilized countries, that one of the greatest hindrances to their efforts comes from the lives of the Englishmen settled among them. They seldom make a serious profession of Christianity, and they often show in their lives a more covetous spirit, more of harshness and of frivolity than the nobler of the heathen around them. This is an even more serious hindrance to the work of missions than are the divisions of the Church of which we hear so much. And it is a far less easy one to remedy. In several eastern countries of late there have been attempts, more or less successful, to arrange a federation of the missions of various bodies of Christians. They are likely

to go on and increase. But the commonsense of mankind always has insisted, and always will insist, on judging religions rather by their fruits in life than by their organization or their professions.

I have read in recent years many papers in the *International Review of Missions*, edited by Mr. Oldham and Miss Gollock. It is an outcome of the great missionary conference of Edinburgh. Its contrast to the missionary magazines of the last century is astonishing. In them usually heathenisms of every kind and, indeed, all non-Christian religions, were represented as a mere horror of darkness, leading men to every kind of evil deed. But the outlook of the *Quarterly Review of Missions*, which is conducted with great ability, is very different. The writers believe, with all their hearts, that it is only Christianity which can redeem and save the world, and many of them have laboured with complete devotion in the mission field. But they realize that in every religion there is some touch of the divine; that in God all, even the heathen, live and move and have their being; that 'in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him.'

In the *Review of Missions*, and in the writings of Christians in India and China, no note is more frequently and strongly struck than that of revolt against the crude notion that we can transport the religious beliefs and the religious organizations of the West unchanged into the Asiatic countries of old civilization. This has been far too often the way of missionaries in the past. Going into the field from the training colleges of the various Churches of Christendom, they have tried merely to extend the domain of those Churches in heathen countries. They have taken for granted that the particular form of Christianity to which they were attached was the best not only for themselves, but for their converts. So in many countries there have arisen little communities—Roman Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian or Congregational—which have grown under the fostering care of the Societies of Europe, which have supplied at once directors and the necessary funds. For a time such evangelization may be successful. But when whole towns or districts accept Christianity and the new faith comes into relations with the best religious thought of the locality, thought which has grown through ages, and been fed by the religious

experiences and aspirations of the more spiritual minds, this mode of spreading Christianity has become inadequate. Can we wonder? If we took the English plants and trees to which we are accustomed and planted them in the plains of India, or the coral islands of the Pacific, would they spread and flourish? Very seldom, I fear, and the species of plants which did survive would considerably change their character to suit altered conditions. You cannot grow good apples in a tropical climate, or good oranges or bananas in a cold climate. And the moral and mental condition of a people is often as dominant in the matters of thought and conduct as are climatic conditions in the physical world. Even in Europe this may be observed. The form of Christianity which would suit Spain would not be likely to suit Scotland. As in the early spread of Christianity so now: to take deep root and to bear good fruit, the religion of Christ must absorb in each country the really valuable elements, not only of the national spirit, but even of the prevalent religions. They must be baptized into Christ, as the morality of the Jewish prophets, the philosophy of Greece, the mysticism of Asia Minor were baptized into Christ in the early days of the Church. The apostles of Jerusalem soon found that it would not do to impose upon the Gentiles the law of Moses, the rite of circumcision and the strict keeping of the Sabbath. The Church had, like Lazarus, to be freed from grave-clothes before it could set forth on its active career. I am sure that the Churches of India, of China, of Japan, will before long demand a freedom to respond to national feeling which cannot be refused. We must remember that twice in the course of history Christianity has obtained a strong hold in the far East, first in the time of the Nestorian Missions, and secondly in the time of Jesuit expansion. Both times the new religion was crushed out, because it came into collision with the national spirit. May the results of the new attempt be more lasting.

In India and China at the present time, nothing is more noteworthy than the conviction, which is expressed in every Congress of Christians in those countries, that they have something to give as well as to take, that the particular forms of Christianity which suit Europe cannot suit them without considerable modifications.

Mr. Chirgwin in the *Challenge* of July 28th writes: 'The history of China, the characteristics of the people, the nature of the work to be done, and the rapidly changing conditions of the country all demand an indigenous Church, which will present an indigenous Christianity which, while it does not sever its continuity with the historical Churches, yet wears a garb and speaks with an accent that are unmistakably Chinese.' The third Chinese Christian Conference lately held reports: 'We confidently hope that the time will soon come when the Church of China will repay in part that which she has bountifully received from her mother Churches in the West, the loving tribute of the daughter—contributions in thought, life and achievement for the enrichment of the Church Catholic.'

In the same way the Conferences held in India are very restive as regards complete control by missionaries. The native leaders point out that religious thought in India is much older than in Europe. And some of them go on to aver that the people of India are by nature far more given to religion than are Western peoples. It is difficult, when almost every leader of thought in England is deploring the weakness of religion and the prevalence of covetousness and materialism among us to meet this objection. If the Christian religious leaders in India can discover a form of religion which, while really Christian in basis and essence, gives scope to the religious genius of the race which has been struggling for utterance ever since the times of the Vedas, the gain to the world cannot fail to be great.

I have read lately in missionary literature a parallel which seems to me suggestive. Since the time of John Stuart Mill it has commonly been allowed by economists that, under some circumstances, commercial protection can be justified, especially when it is desired to naturalize in a country some industry which is in other countries mature. The only way to start such an industry in a new country is to fence it in and foster it with bounties. But when that industry has become hardy and thriving, it must be left to make its own way in the world without favour. In the same way, as my authority suggested, when Christianity is freshly introduced into a country, it is allowable, and may be wise, to support it with foreign money and to direct

it by teachers from abroad. But the object must always be to encourage it to depend as soon as possible on its own resource and be guided by native religious leaders.

I have been speaking of the national spirit in civilized countries as a possible enemy to Christianity which may be reconciled. Of course when the mission is in countries like Africa, where the grade of civilization is lower, and national spirit wanting, the missionaries have other problems to solve. They have to implant, with Christianity, the elements of orderly life, primary teaching in schools, monogamy, the conditions of health and the like. Here they naturally become more autocratic, and often establish a personal influence of a most beneficent kind. But even here they could do nothing unless there were present some valuable elements which they can use as a basis. I will quote one passage from a most suggestive work by Dr. Schweitzer, the most uncompromising of New Testament critics, who, without retracting his criticism, has become a medical missionary in South Africa: 'It is well known that hopes and fears about a life beyond play no part in the religion of primitive man: the child of nature does not fear death, but regards it merely as something natural. The more mediaeval form of Christianity which keeps anxiety about a judgment to come in the foreground has fewer points of contact with his mentality than the more ethical form. To him Christianity is the moral view of life and the world which was revealed by Jesus; it is a body of teaching about the Kingdom of God and the Grace of God. Moreover, there slumbers in him an ethical rationalist. He has a natural responsiveness to the notion of goodness and all that is connected with it in religion . . . In proportion as the negro becomes familiar with the higher moral ideas of the religion of Jesus, he finds utterance for some things in himself that has hitherto been dumb. Thus redemption through Jesus is experienced by him as a two-fold liberation; his view of the world is purged of the previously dominant element of fear—it becomes ethical instead of unethical.'

This passage may prove two points: first, that modernism in men does not prevent them from living a life of missionary devotion; and second, that even in the case of negroes an appreciation of their existing ethical qualities may arouse a sympathy

with them which may facilitate the influence of the religion of Christ.

The two great Semitic religions which have been for ages in contact with Christianity, the Jewish and Mohammedan, constitute a class apart. They are openly hostile, rivals which can hardly be conciliated. Yet it cannot be denied that both have striking merits. Newman, in one of his less dogmatic moods, observed of Mohammedanism: 'No one would deny that there has been a living idea somewhere in a religion which has been so strong, so wide, so lasting a bond of union in the history of the world.' No doubt the Mohammedan spirit, as developed among the Turks, the Arabs and other fighting races, is intensely anti-Christian. But in some Islamic countries, notably in Persia, there have been mystic sects whose religion has come far nearer to some forms of Christianity. Thus while we must confess that in India and Central Africa, for example, the opposition between Islam and Christianity appears to be a life and death struggle, one would not like to say that under some conditions the two religions may not find a more tolerant attitude of each to the other to be possible. This is just one of the subjects as to which one will be glad of the testimony of missionaries.

As to the Jewish religion also, there are interesting questions. It is usual to assume that when Christianity was founded it absorbed into itself all that was of real value in Hebrew religion, and left only the husks. But this is very disputable. Perhaps the violent opposition which Judaism offered to the new religion blinded the early Christians to some of its merits. This is a large subject into which I cannot go at the end of my address. I will only make one suggestion. In recent years the labours of several scholars, among whom Dr. Charles is conspicuous, have brought out of obscurity the eschatological books of the Apocrypha, and have shown how deeply they influenced Christianity at the beginning. But in the Jewish Apocrypha there are other books which are not of apocalyptic character, such as *Ecclesiasticus* and the *Wisdom of Solomon*, which have been very imperfectly appreciated by the Church, but which are full of the noblest intellectual and ethical teaching. One is glad to find that in our new lectionary these books take a larger

place. In the past we have almost limited ourselves in our use of the Old Testament to the prophetic and historical books. The historical books have lost with us much of their credit: but we shall have ample compensation if we pay more attention to the books of Jewish wisdom, including of course *Proverbs*. The Jewish philosophy runs on very different lines from that of Greece; it is much less intellectually speculative, but ethically equally earnest. And we must remember that in the greatest practical system of ancient philosophy, that of the Stoics, the Semitic element is important. In Christianity the heart and will are regarded as more important than the intelligence. And this way of regarding human nature is fully confirmed by modern psychology, which regards the active powers of man as predominant. But the best thing will be for will and intelligence to work together. No one who has lived through the recent troublous times can have failed to see how greatly we all lack wisdom. When the book of Proverbs puts side by side the two sayings, 'Wisdom is the principal thing,' and 'The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom,' it expresses an ideal which we cannot too highly value.

THE EVOLUTION OF RELIGION

By Professor F. B. Jevons, D.Litt., Master of Hatfield College, Durham.

EVOLUTION I shall take to be the process by which things have come to be what they are, and in which they are becoming whatever they may yet be. That process—a process of change—is, as Bergson has described it to be, 'dispersive.' When, however, Bergson says that in the universe there is change but there is nothing which changes, I do not propose to follow him. In religion change is ever taking place; that is to say there are many forms of religion: the process of evolution is 'dispersive.' But the changes and the forms are all changes and forms of religion: there is, that is to say, that which changes. The process indeed is 'dispersive,' but under the process of change there is that which changes; unless there were religion, there could be no forms of religion, they would be

forms of nothing; it is within the unity of religion alone that changes in religion can take place, within that unity are comprised all forms of religion. In the evolution of religion what is manifested—it may be more fully, or it may be less fully—is religion; and the manifestations may be, though it is not invariably or necessarily so, a 'progressive revelation.'

It seems in a way reasonable to assume that, if we are to talk rationally about the evolution of religion, we ought to be able to say what it is that we are talking about, that we ought to begin by defining religion. In point of fact the assumption is neither necessary nor reasonable; we can only define a thing in terms of something else, and we can only define that something else in terms of something else again, and so on and on, until in one direction we come to some simple quality, such as a particular colour, or some simple feeling, such as a pleasure or a pain, of which the meaning cannot be defined, nor the existence doubted; or until in the other direction we reach some conception so wide and general that there is nothing wider in terms of which we can define it. For examples of the latter we need only remind ourselves that, though the existence of living things is indisputable, a definition of 'life' is, by the common consent of biologists, impossible. No one can define consciousness, but it exists nevertheless. Of life there are various forms—plant, animal, man. Of consciousness there are various forms—simple consciousness, self-consciousness, and the consciousness in which self is ignored, forgotten or transcended. Of religion also there are various forms—polydaemonism, polytheism, monotheism, pantheism. And as life finds fuller expression in the animal than in the plant, in man than in the animal; as consciousness finds fuller expression in the self-consciousness of man than in the simple consciousness of the animal, or of the plant, if the plant has any; so religion finds fuller expression in polytheism than in fetichism, in pantheism or monotheism than in polytheism. In life, in consciousness and in religion alike the fuller expression marks the fuller development of human personality, wherein is revealed the Spirit of God.

It is in persons and to persons that the revelation is made; and on that revelation the evolution of religion depends.

Progressive, therefore, though the revelation be, the evolution of religion is not mechanical, but spiritual and personal. It is by persons—it is, in the first instance, by some one person—that the spirit of God is discovered as present to him. And it is only so far as other persons are induced to set to work to discover it for themselves and do discover it in themselves, that the Spirit of God is revealed to them. That revelation to themselves and others is 'conversion.' If others come to feel it as a revelation, the revelation becomes a religion, one of the various forms of religion.

The source of all religions, that is to say of all forms of religion, is the same. The revelation has indeed divers forms and takes place in divers places and ages. But it is in and from some person, always, that every form of religion springs. The evolution of religion is indeed 'dispersive,' and proceeds in many, perhaps innumerable, forms. As infinity has been compared to a circle which has its centre everywhere and its circumference nowhere, so religion has its centre—the centre on which it rests—everywhere, in every person, but finds its circumference only in the circle—to which no bounds can be set—of personality. The variety of forms in which religion displays itself in the course of its evolution is due in part, at least, to the variety of forms which society itself, in the course of its evolution, assumes. But it is equally true, and in some cases it is more important, to notice that religion reacts upon society and re-forms it. Whichever be, in any particular instance, the case, it is clear that there could be no form of society unless society existed, and no form of religion apart from the existence of religion as a fact. The various forms of religion, like the various forms of life, evolve and are scattered abroad, dispersively. They have their little day: one form succeeds another. But though one form succeeds another, one is not a form of the other—monotheism is not a form of polytheism, nor is pantheism a form of monotheism. All three are forms of religion; and all three are what I will call 'terminal'—terminal in the sense that no one of them becomes another. It is as regards the forms it takes that the evolution of religions, like the evolution of the various forms of life, is dispersive; and results in forms which are terminal. But though the forms, whether of

life or of religion, are various, it itself is one, and is none the less one because we cannot define it; and none the less one because it finds fuller expression in one form than in another. Some forms of life have ceased to be, the species are extinct; others are in process of extinction. But life continues, even though some of its forms cease to be. So too with religion. The revelation of the Spirit of God is continual, even though the forms of religion more or less slowly change. If they ossify and fossilize—as by their very nature they do, and are doing, here and now, around us—religion cannot. It finds some other form: its forms may change, but it never dies. If and when they die out, it escapes into some other form—but always into some *form* of religion. Religion, if it could be formal merely would be unreal; but, also, without form religion would be void.

When we speak of the various forms of religion, we imply and admit that in all the forms there is religion; and that of no one form can we say that without it there would be no religion. But that admission is compatible with asserting that in the different forms there are different degrees of revelation. Indeed a fuller revelation seems to entail a change of form—and one which is not merely a formal change. If, then, in every form of religion there is religion; if in the lowest, that is in the most rudimentary form, religion is present, however far from being religion it may appear to us to be; if we find ourselves bound to admit the continuity of religion through all its many forms, to admit continuity in change, and change in continuity, then how are we to conceive the process, the process of evolution, which is continuous though changing and which, though ever continuous, is ever changing? By analogy: the oak is different from the sapling, the sapling from the acorn; the changes are numerous and enormous, but the continuity is undeniable. The man is different from the youth, the youth from the infant; the changes are great, but the continuity is indubitable. There are changes throughout the continuity, but there is continuity throughout the changes. It is only in the continuous that there can be change; and it is only in change that continuity can be displayed. All things change, but if there were no things, there could be no change. I, too, change, and there could be

no change in me if I were not. The 'I' that changes yet remains the same is incapable of definition, but is not the less a reality because we cannot define it. So, too, with religion: the lowest, least developed form may be as different from the highest, as the infant 'muling and puking' in its nurse's arms is from the soldier bearded like the pard; but our inability to say wherein the continuity consists, in the case of religion or the man, is of no avail against the fact of continuity.

It is in society that religion, like man himself, exists: man is a social animal, religion is a social fact. It is not therefore by introspection alone, or by means of individual psychology alone, that religion can exhaustively be studied. Religion is one phase of social conduct, and as such requires to be studied by social psychology: it is, in the words of Dr. Rivers, one aspect of 'the collective behaviour which has found expression in the political institutions, the economic processes, the religious rites, and the material and aesthetic arts of the different forms of human society.'

'Valuable, indeed essential, as is the knowledge of the individual mind, it is clear that new factors must come into action in determining collective behaviour.' Indeed we may go even further and maintain that the individual mind is an abstraction, not a reality, when it is regarded as having an existence absolutely independent of all other minds. No human mind does exist in such absolute independence, any more than a human being exists absolutely independent of all other beings. We may indeed, for the purpose of studying some one quality or relation, dismiss from immediate attention all other qualities and relations; but, when we have done so, when we have abstracted from the complex before us the particular aspect on which we wish to concentrate our attention, what remains before us is an abstraction, not something having an existence of its own, absolute and independent of all else. And it is precisely an abstraction of this kind that is designated by the words 'individual' or 'individual mind.' What does exist in society as a reality, and not as an abstraction independent of society, may be indicated by the term 'person,' if we take the implication of that term to be that 'we are all members one of another.' When, however, the expression 'personal religion' is used, the ten-

dency is to understand thereby something exclusive, rather than social; something implying that religion is concerned solely with individual salvation. In fact, however, it is only in a society that salvation is to be found, and only by a person, meaning by 'person' a member of society. But insistence on this aspect of salvation is apt to exalt the society at the expense of its members, as though religion existed solely to uphold some given institution and to maintain its particular religious rites.

Between these two extremes some of us may wish to find the happy mean, the central position, deviation from which leads both sides into extremes. If we persist in taking the individual, the individual mind, or the individual soul, as a reality and not as an abstraction; and if we endeavour to comprehend the universe from that point of view, then from that position—solipsistic and extreme—the universe is reduced to the experience, actual or possible, of the individual. For me, the individual, the universe then becomes the experience I have or may have: experience which I neither have nor can have can never form part of my universe. On the other hand, if we postulate, as science does, a universe in which individuals are found and which does not depend on the existence of any one or all of them, then the universe, thus conceived as absolute and independent of all experience, becomes a mere abstraction, as far removed from all reality as is the abstract individual. If the individual is abstract, so also is the Absolute. In the case of the individual, the abstraction—the abstract individual—is reached by dismissing from attention his personality, by discarding the simple fact that 'we are all members one of another.' The conception, the abstraction, of the Absolute is reached by discarding the personality of Him, 'in Whom we live and move and have our being.' As against this view, the central position for which we are seeking is found in personality, and the individual and the universe or the Absolute are abstractions from it. It is as members of society, and because only in society do we, or can we, have life, whether physical or spiritual, that we are persons. At the same time, it is only in persons, thus conceived, that society does or can exist. But, as we are very imperfect personalities and as society is far from perfect, it is

plain that the term 'personality,' or society, stands not only for a fact, but also for an ideal which is but imperfectly manifested in what appears at any moment as fact. Nevertheless, the ideal is manifested, however imperfectly, in our imperfect personality and in our society, which being human is imperfect. It is manifested in self-sacrifice. And the paradox of self-sacrifice is that self must be there if it is to be sacrificed, and yet must cease to be, if the sacrifice is to be a reality. Self then seems at any rate to be an ambiguous term, as indeed is indicated by such expressions as self-control on the one hand, and self-realization on the other. In those expressions the self which is supposed to control is at least distinguished from the self which is controlled; and the self which is realized cannot be identical with the self which is sacrificed. If, then, we are to distinguish them, let us speak of that which is controlled as self, and of that which is realized as personality. Then, as in the course of evolution, consciousness is followed by self-consciousness, the consciousness of self may be followed by consciousness of personality, and our imperfect consciousness of personality is at once the index to our imperfect personality and a testimony to our consciousness of a perfect personality.

To be born again it is necessary first to die: the way to life is daily dying. What dies, or may die, daily, is the self. It dies by self-denial. The slow and imperfect process of daily dying, of self-sacrifice, is the growth of personality. Self-sacrifice is the denial of self for the sake of others. But the others for whom self is denied are not other selves, but other persons—not perfect personalities, but persons in the making. The motive of self-sacrifice is to increase the growth in others not of self, but of personality.

The evolution of religion is a process. That process is the revelation of the Spirit of God, of the Perfect Personality, and of the ultimate fact that we are in Him and He in us—ultimate in both senses, as at once that from which we spring, and to which we tend.

Evolution is revelation. Its forms are many, but what is revealed, however imperfectly it is revealed in imperfect personality, is one—the one and only God.

EARLY CHRISTIAN UNIVERSALISM

By the Rev. J. M. CREED, Fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge.

IN each of the four canonical Gospels it is recorded that after His resurrection Jesus Christ formally commissioned His Apostles to evangelize the world. The Gospel according to St. Matthew ends with these words:

> 'And Jesus came and spoke to [the eleven disciples] saying All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me; go then and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe whatsoever I have commanded you; and behold I am with you all the days until the consummation of the age.'

There is a similar charge in the last chapter of the Gospel according to St. Mark:

> 'And [Jesus] said to [the eleven] Go into the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to the whole creation. He that believes and is baptized shall be saved, and he that disbelieves shall be condemned.'

St. Luke reports the last words of the risen Christ as follows:

> 'And [Jesus] said to [the eleven and to them that were with them] Thus it has been written that the Christ should suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and that in his name repentance unto remission of sins should be proclaimed to all the nations—beginning from Jerusalem. Ye are witnesses of these things. And behold I send forth upon you the promise of my Father, and do ye stay in the city until ye have been clothed with power from on high.'

A similar charge is reported in the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. A universal commission is likewise implied in the twentieth chapter of St. John:

> 'Jesus then said to [the disciples] again Peace be to you. As the Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this he breathed on them and saith to them Receive Holy Spirit; whosesoever sins ye remit, they have been remitted to them; whosesoever sins ye retain, they have been retained.'

Literary criticism and historical criticism require us to receive these records with a certain reserve. To begin with St. Mark's Gospel, the oldest of the four: the best Uncial MSS. do not contain the last twelve verses of the Gospel in which the charge occurs, and some MSS. and Versions give an alternative conclusion to the book. Moreover, these twelve verses differ so completely in style and in vocabulary from the rest of the Gospel hat they are unanimously assigned to another

and a later hand. We do not know how the oldest Gospel originally ended.

The concluding words of St. Matthew's Gospel are an integral part of the whole. The vocabulary is characteristically Matthaean, and the sense of the passage sums up the leading ideas of the evangelist. Jesus Christ is founder and lawgiver of the New Israel, which, unlike the Old Israel, will be gathered from among all peoples. The Apostles are commissioned to be Rabbis in the Church; to baptize men of all nations in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and to teach men to observe—not the Law of Moses, but—whatsoever Jesus has commanded them. The wording is not primitive. The Trinitarian baptismal formula does not accord with the practice of the early Church as reported elsewhere in the New Testament, and the legal phraseology of the rest betrays the hand of a late interpreter.

The accounts of the Resurrection appearances in St. Luke and those in St. John agree in assigning the appearances to Jerusalem and the neighbourhood. The Galilean appearance, presupposed in St. Mark (xiv, 28; xvi, 7), and preserved in St. Matthew, has disappeared, and this, although both Evangelists certainly knew and used St. Mark. These Evangelists therefore held themselves at liberty to deal freely with the records and traditions at their disposal. There is every reason to believe that their versions of the words of the risen Christ have been composed with the same freedom. The real difficulty in supposing that Jesus thus formally instructed His disciples to evangelize the world arises out of the subsequent history. St. Luke bears witness against himself: if the Apostles had been solemnly and explicitly commissioned by Jesus after the Resurrection, and before the Ascension, to preach repentance unto remission of sins in His name to all the Gentiles, why did it require a vision to induce Peter to consort with Cornelius the centurion, and how can we account for the amazed utterance of the Jerusalem Church when Peter told them the story of Cornelius's conversion and baptism: 'Then to the Gentiles too has God granted repentance unto life'? (Acts xi, 18).

It is clear that the Resurrection appearances convinced the disciples that Jesus was alive again and exalted by God to a

position of supreme authority, and subsequent history showed that the Resurrection had established a relationship between Jesus and His Church, which first displaced and then replaced the Church's loyalty to the Law, but the process was gradual, and it is difficult to suppose that it was clearly anticipated from the first. The Gospels, as we have them, were not written until the Christian Church had already struck its roots into the cosmopolitan society of the ancient world, and the sense of universal mission which the Church had by that time acquired has left its impress on the evangelical story. That Christ is saviour of the world is hinted or implied in the introductory sections of St. Matthew, of St. Luke, and of St. John. Wise men from the East bring offerings to the Christ child; the universalism of Deutero-Isaiah is caught up in Simeon's *Nunc Dimittis*, while St. John prefaces the story of the historic Incarnation with the doctrine of the Eternal Word: nor in the case of St. Luke and of St. John is it hard to trace the same *motif* in the body of their works. It is the same thought which has shaped our records of the words of the risen Master: by a natural flight of the imagination the Evangelists conceived that the risen Christ must have formally anticipated the expansion of His Church on earth and stated in so many words that universality which from the beginning was implicit in His teaching.

It is not my intention in this paper to enter at any length upon the complicated problem of the historical value of the Gospels, yet the question cannot be entirely ignored, even in a brief paper; for when once it is recognized that the canonical Gospels—practically our only authorities for the life of Jesus—were written for Greek-speaking Christians a generation and more after the events recorded occurred, and when it is admitted that the needs and beliefs of Greek-speaking Christians in Rome, or Corinth, or Antioch, or Ephesus, have determined the selection and the presentation of the material, the question inevitably suggests itself to our minds whether in that case the Gospels can be securely regarded as authorities for the life of the historical Jesus at all. Dr. Foakes-Jackson and Dr. Kirsopp Lake go so far as to assert that

> 'the chief difficulty in determining the teaching of Jesus or his purpose in choosing the Twelve, is that the only documents which

we possess were not written in order to give this information, but to confirm the opinions of Gentile Christians.' (*Beginnings of Christianity*, Vol. I, p. 267.)

Historical enquiry does not admit of the same exact methods which are proper to experimental sciences. Exact knowledge is indeed rightly required in dealing with documents, but when we come to consider the relation of documents to events, other faculties must be brought into play and other *criteria* must be applied. We must ask whether the proposed reconstruction of events is intelligible in itself, and whether it makes room for the documents and other sources of information at our disposal. Let us apply such a test as this to the interpretation of early Christianity which has been given us by Dr. Foakes-Jackson and Dr. Kirsopp Lake. These scholars are concerned to maintain two theses: the first is that the Gospels are unreliable authorities for the life of Jesus Christ: they are primary authorities only for the beliefs of the Gentile Christians who read them; the second thesis is that Christianity began in Palestine as a Jewish sect preaching Repentance, and then in the Gentile world passed over into a mystery religion. Now if it be the case that the Synoptic Gospels represent not so much the real life of Jesus as the beliefs of the Gentile Christians about Him, and if it be further true that the Gentile Christians were dominated by the ideas of the mystery religions, then we surely ought to find the Synoptic Gospels permeated with the ideas of the mystery religions. But this they obviously are not, and the more convinced you are that the Gospels reflect the opinions of Gentile Christians, the more sceptical you ought to become as to the influence of the mystery religions; or, conversely, the more you are impressed by the influence of the mystery religions the more convinced you ought to become of the essential historicity of the Gospels. For my own part I am disposed to think that there is an element of truth in both the contentions brought forward in *The Beginnings of Christianity*. I am disposed to think that the mystery religions did exert a real, though quite indirect, influence on the development of the Gentile Churches, but so convinced am I by Dr. Foakes-Jackson's and Dr. Kirsopp Lake's other contention that the Gospels are primary evidence for the interests and beliefs of early Christians, that

I feel bound to conclude that much recent literature—Dr. Foakes Jackson's and Dr. Kirsopp Lake's book included—seriously under-estimates the significance of the historical Jesus Christ for the Gentile Churches. And, further, I find in the fact that the sayings and deeds recorded in the Synoptic Gospels fit into a Palestinian background, albeit reported and preserved by Gentile Churches, a strong reason for accepting their substantial historicity.

After this long, but I think not irrelevant, digression, let us turn to the teaching of Jesus Christ recorded in the Synoptic Gospels, in order that we may discover how far and in what sense His teaching is universal.

'The preaching of Christ,' writes Paul Wendland in his great work *Die Hellenistisch-Römisch Kultur*, 'has no relation to Hellenism.' 'Jesus,' echoes Wellhausen from the side of Semitic scholarship, 'was no Christian; he was a Jew' (*Einleitung in die drei ersten Evangelien*, p. 102). The recognition of this historic fact is the necessary preliminary to the interpretation of the Gospel. In the evangelical narrative, 'the kingdoms of the world and their glory' are in the background, dim and undefined. We are indeed often reminded that Palestine is under Roman control, and it is not unimportant that our Lord shows no hostility to the Roman power as such: 'Render to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's,' He told the Pharisees, and it has been plausibly suggested by Dr. Kirsopp Lake that the injunctions of non-resistance were primarily meant as a criticism of Zealot nationalism; but the general ideas of the world and of history in which He moves are the ideas, not of Greece or Rome, but of the Hebrews. Abel murdered by Cain, Noah and the Flood, Lot's wife who turned back, David in flight, Solomon 'in all his glory,' the inquiring Queen of Sheba, Jonah and the repentant Ninevites—such are the persons and incidents, familiar to speaker and hearers alike, which point the warnings and the promises of His teaching. He Himself is last in the succession of prophetic messengers whom God has sent to His people: 'Last of all He sent unto them His Son.' If we try to tone down the Hebraic colouring, then the Person and the teaching of the historic Jesus Christ evaporate into unintelligible abstractions.

Yet, while we do justice to the Hebraic atmosphere of the Gospels, we need not surrender to a contemporary fashion which sees in the central figure of Christianity a Jew, nothing but a Jew, and a somewhat ordinary Jew at that. The claim that the preaching of the historic Jesus has universal application is no loose idea which does not admit of methodical treatment. Jesus had been baptized by John the Baptist, and up to the end He regarded the mission of John as the foundation of His own. 'The Baptism of John—was it from heaven or from men?' That is the test question. And John had already undermined the comfortable doctrine of Jewish privilege. 'Bring forth fruits worthy of repentance, and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father, for I say unto you that God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham.' Jesus Himself is sent 'to the lost sheep of the House of Israel,' but for Him, as for John, national privilege conveys no assurance of divine favour, and it is a natural corollary of John's teaching that 'many shall come from the East and from the West, and shall recline with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob' at the Messianic banquet in the Kingdom of God. Negatively, then, the teaching of Jesus, like that of the Baptist, is in principle opposed to national particularism. Positively, too, the teaching of our Lord hinges on thoughts universal in their range. God the Father, Who sends His rain on evil and good alike; the value of the individual soul—'Whosoever shall cause to stumble one of these little ones that believe, it were better for him if a mill-stone were hanged about his neck and he were cast into the sea'; the call to unworldliness—'Ye cannot serve God and mammon'; forgiveness—'Forgive us our debts as we forgive them that are indebted to us'; Nature a parable of God's Kingdom—'So is the Kingdom of God, as if a man sowed seed in his field.' There is nothing Jewish or particular in these themes; they are human and universal.

Hatch's famous Hibbert Lectures on *The influence of Greek ideas and usages upon the Christian Church* (1888) open with a contrast between the 'ethical sermon' which 'stood in the forefront of the teaching of Jesus Christ' and 'the metaphysical creed which stood in the forefront of the Christianity of the fourth century.' Of late years there has been a lively

reaction against the old Liberalism which saw in the Sermon on the Mount the 'essence' of Christianity. Scholars have pointed out the importance of the eschatological idea in the Gospels themselves, and we are reminded that the extant epistles of the great Apostle to the Gentiles show but few traces of the direct influence of the Gospel sayings. I have already given reasons for thinking that this reaction has gone too far and that the influence of the words and thoughts of Jesus upon the mind of the early Church went deeper than some critics seem prepared to allow. Nevertheless, it remains true that for Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles, Jesus was not so much a Teacher as a Divine Redeemer. In the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ, he saw the crucifixion and resurrection of the Son of God, made man for our sakes, by faith in Whom elect men of all nations are called to be saved.

> 'There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither slave nor free; there is no male and female; for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.'[1]

It is a historical commonplace that the conquests of Alexander the Great, the cosmopolitanism of the Stoics, Roman Imperialism, cleared the ground for a universal faith, and we are coming to see more clearly how the Catholic Church of history absorbed into itself the living forces of that ancient world. But the ancient world cannot explain St. Paul or early Christian Universalism, for St. Paul started from presuppositions which ran counter to the whole tendency of Hellenistic life and thought. The Hellenistic world of that day was cosmopolitan. Aristotle indeed had recognized a natural division of mankind into Greeks and barbarians. Greeks were by nature fitted to rule; barbarians—or Gentiles, ἔθνη as Aristotle sometimes calls them[2]—were by nature fitted to be slaves. But Aristotle wrote from the standpoint of the Greek city-state. He failed to appreciate the revolution which his pupil, Alexander, was effecting in the life of man. It was the Stoics who propounded a new conception of political relationships to fit the new order:

> 'The famous *Republic* of Zeno, founder of the Stoic sect,' writes Plutarch, 'all tends to this one point: that instead of living by cities or by peoples, separated each from the other by private rights, we should count all men fellow-countrymen and fellow-citizens, that our

[1] *Gal.* iii. 28. [2] *Pol.* 1252*b*; 1263*a*.

life and our world may be one, as though we were a gregarious herd, bred up under a common law.'[3]

At the time of the rise of Christianity, Stoic cosmopolitanism had been in the world for three centuries and a half, and already it had secured the allegiance of some of the best minds of Rome; but not all the wisdom of the Stoics had succeeded in dissolving the national exclusiveness of the Jew. St. Paul inherited the traditions of the one faith and the one culture which had held their own against the tide of Hellenism. Paul agreed with Aristotle against the Stoics that there was a deep natural division in mankind. Men were by nature either Gentiles, ἔθνη, or Israelites; and as against the Gentiles, Israel held a privileged position: 'to them have been committed the Oracles of God.'[4] The Gentiles were men, but they were to Israel what a wild olive is to a cultivated olive.[5] St. Paul did not abandon this idea, but he supplemented it: in the Person of Christ he found a new principle of life which was strong enough to break down the middle wall of partion and to unite in one society these naturally diverse groups. We lose the force of St. Paul's universalism if we do not first grasp his presuppositions. To him the universality of the Church was not a commonplace, but a paradox—a 'mystery' which required to be revealed.

To sum up: Christianity did not begin as a formally universal or international religion. It sprang from the one national society which had held its own in face of cosmopolitan Hellenism. Our Lord Himself was no Greek sage. His work on earth was to re-affirm and crown the principles of the Hebrew prophets. Like them He addressed Himself to His own people, and like them, He repudiated the idea that national privilege dispensed from the necessity of repentance. His teaching handles themes that are universal—God our Father, Nature, Forgiveness, the Individual. In St. Paul this Person, crucified and risen, is Redeemer and Inspirer of a regenerated humanity. But Paul is not Stoic in his ideas. For him, as for Aristotle, mankind is naturally divided into two classes, but in the Christian 'mystery' the separation of Jew and Gentile has been superseded.

[3] Plutarch, *De Alexandri Magni Fortuna and Virtute*, I, 329A.
[4] *Rom.* iii. 2. [5] *Rom.* xi. 17 *f.*

PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY AND ITS COMPETITORS

By the Rev. C. W. Emmet, B.D., Fellow of University College, Oxford.

CHRISTIANITY survived, and its contemporaries did not; no one would seriously suggest the revival of any one of them as the religion of the Western world to-day. The question may reasonably be raised whether after all it was Christianity which conquered, or only an amalgam of the old religions under a new name; but the complete victory of what is called Christianity is a fact of history which we may take for granted. We have then to ask why Christianity conquered and, to come to a still more fundamental issue, whether it deserved to do so.

At later meetings our Conference will pass on to further questions. Granting, it may be said, that Christianity was not only the most successful, but actually the best, religion for an earlier age, we must not jump lightly to the conclusion that it is also the best for us. That will be our problem to-morrow morning. Or, admitting that it still holds the field for the Western world, it does not necessarily follow that it is suited to the East or to races in a more primitive stage of development; that we shall consider on Thursday. And lastly, Christianity may be the best all round to-day, but may it be destined in its turn to give place to something better when mankind as a whole has reached a higher stage of development? The finality of Christianity will occupy our attention on Saturday.

We are not, then, here directly concerned with these latter questions. Nevertheless, if we can arrive at some conclusion as to why Christianity originally conquered and whether it deserved to do so, we may throw light on the problem whether it may be expected to maintain its position now and in the future.

The causes of the original triumph of Christianity have been examined from many different points of view. Gibbon's answer in his famous fifteenth chapter is well known. You will

remember that he gives five main reasons—the zeal of the primitive Church, the doctrine of the immortality of the soul, the possession of miraculous powers, the virtues of the first Christians and the power of organization shown in the government of the Church. Harnack's great work on *The Expansion of Christianity*, written from a very different point of view, gives much the same explanations. The new religion triumphed because it was a Gospel of salvation and of love, a religion of the Spirit and of power, shown in a new morality, a religion of authority and of reason, a religion which presented its adherents as the chosen people of God and could point to the fulfilment of prophecy.

Now is strikes us at once with regard to such explanations, and particularly with regard to Gibbon's, that after all they deal mainly with secondary causes. It is no doubt true to say that Christianity succeeded because its adherents were better men. But it does not carry us very far; if the comparison may be forgiven, it is much the same as saying that the Australians won the Test matches because they were the better cricketers. What made them better? The question at once arises why, in the first centuries A.D., there suddenly emerged a group of men and women of sufficient zeal, conviction, enthusiasm for humanity, to make such an impact on the world? It is the natural sequel to the problem I ventured to put before you last year; why did the carpenter of Nazareth make his unique impression on his age? What was it that convinced the first converts and what had they to offer? It is indeed clear from the Apologists and from the confessions of opponents that the character and behaviour of Christians did in fact prove the strongest argument for the truth of Christianity. And if we take this for granted and try to go behind it, we shall not forget the important corollary that in the home parish and in the mission field alike the same must still hold good. It has indeed become somewhat the fashion to speak lightly of the heroism of the early martyrs. We have reacted from the superficial apologetic which adduces this as an irresistible proof of the truth of what they believed; we have seen in late years too many examples of a similar constancy in support of very doubtful causes. None the less, a readiness to give your body to be torn by wild beasts or to

starve yourself to death, to suffer deliberately in cold blood, does mean conviction, and, where on a wide scale you find such conviction, the faith which inspires it will always have some element of permanent value.

We shall agree that what a man is depends on what he believes, not of course on his formal creed or confession, but on his fundamental convictions, on his sense of values, in the last resort on his relation to God. What, then, lay behind those qualities to which Gibbon and Harnack rightly call our attention? Here we have to make a delicate distinction. A great part of early Christian literature is concerned with commending the faith to those within and to those without. And many of the arguments are futile, and this not only to Modernists, but to any educated Christian of to-day. We need only remind ourselves of the argument from prophecy which plays so large a part in the writings of Justin and the apologists. Rahab's scarlet thread was a prophecy of the Cross; not only Joshua the leader, but the Joshua in whose field the ark rested were anticipations of Jesus. The Scriptures were ransacked for references to water, all of which had something to do with Christian Baptism.

If such dialectic and theology represent the essentials of Christianity, it cannot be regarded as a final way of truth; it only survived because it happened to be better than contemporary religions and philosophies. Or we might even hold that it survived on account of its very weaknesses and errors. I am not sure indeed that it is possible on strictly historical grounds to prove conclusively that Christianity conquered on account of its permanent elements rather than by those lower elements which chanced to fit in with the needs of the moment. The whole process is so obscure and complicated. You can make out a case for the position that its victory was due to a naive sacramentalism, or to a readiness to harbour popular superstitions under thin disguises, coupled with an impatient and even fanatical attitude towards rival cults, or to an insistence on a fear of hell and future torment which was grossly incongruous with the Father proclaimed by Jesus. And, having done that, you can go on to argue that its survival had nothing to do with its merits. It seems to me that, while one can show

that such a position is based on a one-sided reading of early Christian history, yet the final answer must depend in the last resort on our attitude to the universe as a whole. Do we believe that it is in the end an irrational universe in which error is stronger than truth? And it depends on our view of human nature. Do we believe that a mixed character, such as Lord Northcliffe, attracts his fellows by his worst qualities rather than his best? Is Shakespeare popular because he is occasionally improper, or Mozart because he gives scope to the florid singer? If, however, we hold that *in the long run* the good rather than the evil wins the allegiance of mankind, we have a right to take the highest elements in historical Christianity and to find in them rather than in its weaknesses at once the ultimate cause and the sufficient justification of its triumph.

This view we shall frankly take in this paper, and we go on to ask what were the vital and fundamental convictions about God and His relation to man which lay behind the new life and the halting theology and dialectic by which men attempted at first to explain it. These convictions may seem to us commonplaces, but they were not commonplaces then—and even now they are commonplaces of which we are only beginning to realize the significance.

1. *A new and higher conception of God.* Speaking last year about the Jesus of history, I urged that the central fact about His teaching and work was that He enabled men to understand in quite a new way what God was like. His insistence on the Fatherhood of God was a development of the best teaching of Judaism, but it meant the unerring selection of a single element and the unflinching elimination of all other elements, irrelevant or false. Especially did He set aside the avenging God of Apocalyptic. At no time has the Church retained the clear vision of its founder; but in spite of all aberrations and inconsistencies it has never lost the belief in God as the personal Father, and no one can doubt that this was one of the main causes of its original victory. Dr. Rashdall, in his *Bampton Lectures*, has shown how the conviction of the love of God has always been the attractive power of the Cross, whatever incompatible theories of Atonement may have been adduced by theologians.

If this conception was an advance on Judaism, still more clearly was it an advance on Greek philosophy. The Church learnt much from philosophy, but its own peculiar contribution was its certainty of the nearness, the love and the personality of God. Experts discuss how far Socrates or Plato, Aristotle or the Stoics, really believed in one personal God; you never have to discuss that with regard to the New Testament or early Christian literature. The Stoic idea of the *Logos Spermaticos* was in many ways fruitful, but it was 'Abba, Father,' 'God is Love,' which converted the world. Dr. Glover, in his *Conflict of Religions in the Early Roman Empire*, gives abundant proof of this.

Or again, in contrast to the mystery religions, Loisy, who is prepared to treat Christianity as itself a mystery religion, states as the first cause of its victory over its rivals its unflinching hold on the personality and transcendence of the one God which it derived from Judaism through the Gospel.[1] It might indeed be held that in all the various cults it was, after all, one and the same God who was invoked under different names, but were they really the same in character? Many names or one name, was there a single unified conception behind them? So far from its being true that it is one and the same God who is always worshipped under different names, we may doubt whether Christians themselves have always worshipped the same God under the one name.

No less clear was the gain as compared with Gnosticism. To quote Mr. Edwin Bevan[2]:

> 'Even at first sight the Gospel must have presented in some ways a striking contrast to "Hellenistic theology." It must have seemed such a simplification. Instead of the enormous apparatus of mystical words and ceremonial practices, to believe that in order to conquer all the possible terrors of the Unknown, the whole range of ghostly enemies, one needed only to know Jesus! It must have been like the lifting off of a burden to say 'I believe in One God, Maker of heaven and earth.'

In the words of Tatian, 'it sets man free from ten thousand tyrants.'

It was a winning creed and a simple creed, and men were able to hold it with conviction. Marcus Aurelius, himself

[1] *Les Mystères Païens et le Mystère Chrétien*, p. 343.
[2] *Hellenism and Christianity*, p. 87.

attracted by the conception of Providence, but hesitating to commit himself, notices the stubbornness with which Christians held their belief. Men do not readily let go that which is based on a vital personal experience.

2. With this view of God went *a new conception of Man and of God's relation to Him.*

> 'Into all these great divisions of the world came men eager to tell "Good news"—generally quite commonplace and unimportant people with a "treasure in earthen vessels." Their message they put in various ways, with the aphasia of ill-educated men, who have something to tell that is far too big for any words at their command. It was made out at last that they meant a new relation to God in virtue of Jesus Christ.'[3]

Man is worth saving and God thinks it worth while to save him. Both of these beliefs alike was a puzzle to a Celsus.

> 'An excessive opinion of the value of the human soul,' says Glover, 'and an absurd fancy of God's interest in man are two of the chief faults he sees in Christianity.' And he quotes from Celsus: 'It must be clear to everybody, I should think, that those who are sinners by nature and training, none could change, not even by punishment—to say nothing of doing it by pity.'[4]

Some measure of the revolution wrought by Christianity may be seen in the fact that, though many would still object to the idea that the Absolute could take any personal interest in the individual, there are not many, in the West at least, who would argue openly that the individual is not worth saving and cannot be saved.

3. Side by side with a right idea of God's relation to man *went a right idea of His relation to the material world.* This was the issue in the conflict with Gnosticism. Was matter in itself a mistake, however brought about, an evil from which spirit must free itself as soon as may be by whatever means it can discover? Or, even if matter be in comparison with spirit subsidiary, and in comparison with eternity temporary, does it come none the less from the One Creator of all things visible and invisible, in its true nature very good? Again, in spite of inconsistencies of practice and thought, evidenced in some forms of monasticism, asceticism and views of marriage, the Christian answer has been from the first decisive. And this carried with it the possibility of that for the full recognition of

[3] Glover, *op. cit.*, p. 142.
[4] Glover, *op. cit.*, pp. 242, 257.

which we are still working, a genuine Incarnation of the Divine in human flesh. Such an Incarnation may be difficult to conceive; it may raise a variety of almost insoluble problems, but it will no longer be regarded as itself a mingling with the unclean in a way which is derogatory to the idea of Godhead. It may, however, be pointed out that there was a further step which the influence of contemporary philosophy made almost impossible for the early Church. The insistence on the changelessness, the self-sufficiency, the *apatheia* of the Godhead prevented the realization of the truth that suffering is in some sense possible to God, that a God who does not suffer while His creatures are suffering contradicts the belief that He is love. It has been left for modern theology and philosophy to shake themselves free from this evil tradition.[5]

A real, not a phantom, Incarnation was the basis of Christianity. This is the second advantage which Loisy finds in 'the Christian mystery' as compared with the other mystery religions. It was not dependent on vague myths of Saviour Gods, which you could never tie down to any given time or place, but had its firm basis in a historical figure. And, we may add, what a figure! Jesus has always been the distinctive thing in Christianity. In other words, God had done something in history. The crucial fact in the new faith was that it proved itself an effective religion of redemption in a way which its rivals could not. It brought redemption from fear of fate and of stars and of demons. '*Quis separabit?*' is the triumphant cry of St. Paul:

> 'I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.'

The list is not a meaningless flight of rhetoric. Each word represents a mysterious power of which men went in dread; even 'height' and 'depth' are technical words for the ascension or declination of a star, which might control the destiny of men in a way which none could resist. And the fear of death! Bevan[6] suggests that in the ancient world the fear of

[5] See, *e.g.*, Rashdall, *Bampton Lectures*, pp. 452 ff., Pringle-Pattison, *Idea of God*, pp. 407 ff.

[6] *Op. cit.*, p. 82; see also Murray, *Four Stages of Greek Religion.*

death was more powerful than amongst ourselves. Philosophers laboured with what seems to us unnecessary persistence to fortify men against it. Gibbon is not wrong in the significance he attaches to the promise of immortality. Joyful trust takes the place of what was at best a pathetic resignation. Above all the new faith meant redemption from sin and the lower self. We must follow the teaching of the new biology and study a religion as a living organism. It is not enough to examine its doctrines one by one in abstraction; we have to look at the actual experience. Christians were delivered from the bondage of corruption in a way which others were not; they did, as Gibbon sees, show themselves better men. A religion which can bring about this result must at least have some vital truth at its core.

4. We need not elaborate the point that *this redemption was in essence universal*, based on the belief in the inherent value of the soul, as we should say of human personality. Christianity shared the universalism of the mystery religions; it may be that in some measure it derived it from them. They too transcended caste and nationality. A man became a member of them not by the accident of birth, but by deliberate choice. And he who would might make this choice. But here we note a difference all in favour of Christianity. Like Gnosticism, they offered a private salvation; they saved the individual from the world. No doubt incidentally they sometimes laid stress on ethics, and even on social ethics; they might make the initiate a better member of society. But they did not claim to transform society or to save the world.[7] Once more, though this was often forgotten, the fundamental aim of Christianity was the setting up of a kingdom where the will of God was to be realized. Hence the stress on ethics, derived from the Gospels and the New Testament; the commands to love and serve were not, as the eschatologists vainly urge, merely the rules by which a man might save himself from the coming conflagration; they were the permanent principles by which the children of the Divine Family were to live as brethren. And, to refer to Gibbon once more, this was really the secret of the

[7] For the egoism and the aristocratic individualism of the Mysteries, see Bousset, *Kyrios Christos*, pp. 152 ff.

genius of organization which helped to conquer the world.[8] No doubt you can see in the growth of the Church's system the human 'will to power,' the desire for symmetry, for centralization and for discipline. But that which made it possible, that which held together the isolated members of scattered Churches, was the sense of solidarity, the mutual love and sympathy which came from a right view of men's relation to God and their relation to one another. Stoicism, says Professor Mackintosh,[9] 'is interested chiefly in what man *is*; it is silent on the illimitable prospect of what man may *become* through the divine intention revealed in Christ.' And Christian ethics and the organization of the Church at their best had in view the building up of a spiritual kingdom of free self-conscious persons united to the Father in Whom they had their being and to their fellows, without whom they could not be made perfect. The new universalism and the new ethics sprang from the one and the same principle.

5. For Christianity was, as no other, *the religion of hope*. We spoke of the conquest of the fear of death and the promise of immortality. But there was more in it than a boon dangled before the eyes of the individual. Professor Gilbert Murray speaks of Judaism and Christianity as the two religions which really have the forward look. Christianity, in place of meaningless cycles or the working of a blind fate, suggested an intelligible interpretation for the world-process as a whole. Not only was its Founder a historical figure, but all history had a meaning, and a moral meaning, from first to last. No doubt this conviction was clothed in very inadequate language derived from Jewish Apocalyptic; it was supported by an artificial view of prophecy and the Old Testament. It was recast by Irenaeus in his theory of 'recapitulation'; the purpose of God was to restore the divine image lost in the fall. But this was more than the regaining of what had once been. Throughout the process there was a real advance; the theory of Irenaeus is really, as Bousset has shown, one of evolution. Augustine in his turn in the *Civitas Dei* transforms the ideas of the old Apocalyptic,

[8] Murray, *Four Stages of Greek Religion*, p. 178, even sees in this organization the most distinctive feature of early Christianity.

[9] *The Originality of the Christian Message*, p. 62.

while retaining the language and the forms. The Kingdom of God becomes the existing Church, and history has a definite meaning. But it remained for a scientific theory of evolution to bring out the full significance of this feature of Christian thought—the one far-off divine event to which the whole creation moves, nor could its attraction be completely realized till the conception was disentangled from its fierce and revengeful elements in the quite alien doctrine of hell and an external judgment. It was the folly of the Church in the nineteenth century that it was so slow to see that a belief in evolution was the crown of the Christian doctrine of the world and God. It fitted into the Christian scheme, as it could fit into the scheme of no other religion.

We suggest, then, that Christianity conquered its rivals because it had a truer conception of God, His relation to man and the world; it was an effective religion of redemption not merely for the individual, but for society as a whole; it had its basis in history and gave a meaning to history which justified its message of hope. Now, it is obvious that if these are really its essential features, they are not the temporary response to the needs of one particular age or nation, liable to be transcended by the principles of a higher civilization. In substance they are permanent, though in form they may be developed or restated. And here is, after all, the characteristic which justified, and will continue to justify, Christianity. It is dynamic, not static. It is not the religion of a book or a code or a fixed external revelation. It derives from a Person and has itself something of the marks of personality. Personality of the highest type has always the power of assimilation, of growth by contact with others, while yet remaining itself. Christianity from the first could learn and baptize into itself the best from its environment. Tertullian's[10] '*viderint qui Stoicum et Platonicum et dialecticum Christianismum protulerint*' soon gave place in theory, as it had already done in practice, to Clement's[11] view that while the loaves on which the multitude were fed represented the Jewish law, the fishes stood for Greek philosophy. True, the new faith often drew from its surroundings elements of doubtful value, though on the whole it showed not only an inspiration of

[10] *De Praescr.* vii. [11] *Strom.* vi, 93.

selection, but also what Mr. Bevan calls 'an inspiration of rejection.' I have not laboured these points, both because they are so generally recognized, and also because the details of the exact measure of indebtedness for this or that doctrine or practice do not seem to me to matter for the purpose before us. The big things are that Christianity as a living religion had from the beginning this power of assimilation, and yet that it always showed itself jealous of its own peculiar standing. Loisy is no prejudiced judge, and to me at least he seems to exaggerate greatly the debt of Christianity to the mysteries, but he insists that any idea of syncretism is out of place.

> 'Dans le christianisme, la philosophie et la mystique païennes sont en une certain mesure absorbées par l'Evangile et utilisées par lui; dans la gnosticisme, c'est plutôt l'Evangile qui est absorbé par la philosophie et la mystique païennes.'[12]

You can, he says, no more find a religion which is absolutely 'pure' in its descent than a nation. But, he argues, just as the true nation is distinguished from an accidental coalition, so Christianity kept its own individuality; in no sense was it a mere mosaic of beliefs and rites 'borrowed' from different quarters. The resemblances, we may add, may be striking and significant, but in the end it is the differences which matter.[13]

It is these for which men have thought it worth while to contend, and it is these to which Christianity owed its first triumph. We are not blind to the light which comes from other sources; we welcome enthusiastically every indication that the Spirit of God reveals Himself in divers faiths. But those who, like Harnack and Loisy, Glover and Bevan, have soaked themselves in the atmosphere of the literature of paganism no less than of Christianity are most emphatic in their view that there were distinctive features in Christianity, and that these counted most. The Modernist believes that they still count, and that it is they which will make the religion, of which Christ is the centre, the religion of humanity.

[11] *Op. cit.*, p. 355 f.

[13] In one of the discussions a saying of Laurence Oliphant was quoted to the effect that 'the only monopoly of a religion is a monopoly of errors.' This appears to me profoundly untrue.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE WESTERN WORLD

By Miss L. Dougall, author of *Pro Christo et Ecclesia,* &c.

OUR Western civilization to-day is in real peril, and whatever its faults may be, a relapse into a less civilized state would mean great spiritual loss. It is only in a rational civilization that man rises in the spiritual scale. If Christianity be not a great civilizing force, able to save whatever gain man has made and build it higher, then it cannot be the final and universal religion.

The thesis of this paper is that if the Church had fully understood and accepted the purpose and spirit of Jesus Christ, the great rational Greco-Roman civilization, so far as we can see, need not have been swept away; and that by now understanding fully and fully accepting the plan of Jesus Christ, our own civilization can be saved and transformed into a true Christendom.

Allow me to adapt an old legend to illustrate the subject.

Two human souls leaving this earth went up to the gate of the Christian Paradise. St. Peter opened the door, and with courtesy said to each, 'Good morrow, sir.' Then he asked the first what reason he could show for seeking entrance.

He was a shadowy, yet white and luminous, soul. He said: 'I saw that my generation was perverse and very evil, and I the worst of sinners. I left my kindred and the world, and sought in solitude to cleanse my soul from all earthly desire that in purity I might worship my Saviour.'

Then St. Peter looked kindly upon him, and said: 'Many devout souls among the heathen have done as much. There are other pleasant places for them and for you. This place is prepared for those who have served the purposes of our Master, Jesus Christ.'

Then the second stepped up with joy. He was a splendid soul, shining with golden and red light. 'I am a statesman,' he said, 'I sought to bring the world to the obedience of Christ.'

'Have you succeeded?' asked St. Peter.

'Of course not,' said he; 'but I did my bit. Every man in my nation was trained to fight for the right. On all sides we assailed the infidel and the oppressor and were victorious. Within our dominions, everyone who injured the poor or betrayed the innocent was cast down.'

'What about forgiving enemies and doing good to the injurious and that sort of thing?' asked St. Peter.

'That,' said the statesman, 'is for private life and personal religion. I had the children taught in the schools and the churches to do battle by word and deed with all those who injure others, but to forgive their personal wrongs.'

'Do they do it?' asked St. Peter.

'You expect too much of human nature,' said the statesman.

'Man is a creature of habit,' said St. Peter. 'If he is trained to resent every wrong done to others or to his nation he will resent wrongs done to himself.'

'I should like, if you please, to come in and rest,' said the statesman. 'We can talk over these things at leisure.'

'There are other places where good pagans can rest,' said St. Peter. 'This is the Paradise of the Master.' And he shut the door.

The two forms of holy living just indicated were ideals in the Gentile world before Christianity entered it. The Church, in all good faith, baptized them in the name of Christ. We are told that in his life-time our Lord foretold that much would be done in his name which he would not recognize. In any case, we have the criticism of time upon these two methods of soul-saving and world-saving. The cloister and the battlefield have flown the flag of Christ for two thousand years, and the world is still unsaved. Is it not possible that our Lord Jesus Christ, by virtue of his great and original religious genius, perceived and taught a more effective method of world-saving than the Church has suspected, much less tried? Is it not, at least, well worth while to study attentively the history of his epoch to see if something very important in his plan of salvation may not have been omitted from our plan, and its place filled by something that throws the whole original plan out of gear?

I. The Gentile Idea of Salvation.

In justification of such hypothesis and such research, let us notice that all our Christian documents come to us through the Gentile Church. We should expect, then, that Gentile ideals of the good life and security after death would influence, not only the slight changes that might occur in the documents through oral and scribal repetition, but the selection of material and such explanatory clauses as the narrator deemed necessary. A community may change its nominal religion; it may even change its ideals; but it does not suddenly or easily change its background of picture-thinking. The religious Gentile, when converted to Christianity in the first and second centuries, had no mental picture of the salvation of his nation or state. Such a consummation was not the goal of his endeavour. In all that we know of the Mystery-religions; in all that we know of the ethical philosophies of that Gentile world, the salvation of the individual, either by security from malign influence here and hereafter, or by the building up of his ethical character, or both, was an end in itself. He was not to be saved in order that he might be a saving factor in his own secular group, or in order that his group should be a factor in the saving of the world. These were Jewish ideas, having their corresponding pictures in the Jewish mental panorama; they were not the ideas of the religiously-inclined man among the Gentiles, who pictured the world about him as a hopeless prey to evil spirits, or as in hopeless ethical degradation. He did not see himself as part of any wholesome secular group, or conceive of his God as offering a social salvation.

Although the later Stoic candidates for perfection or salvation taught the duty of forgiveness in private life and of neighbourly and public service, they also taught an inward or intellectual pilgrimage from a ruined world. The ideal public service was that of the warrior or the statesman who championed his country. As a soldier, not only in the earthly commonwealth, but in the commonwealth of the gods, a wise man must be a good citizen, even though the mass of men must always be bad, but his chief duty was to his own soul.

Seneca, Epictetus, Plutarch—these show us how earnest was the soul-saving of the moral teacher; but, so far from encouraging men to have such affection for their human environment as to be unwilling to approach God without holding the hands of their fellows, as to be unable to think of immortal blessedness except in the company of their nation and kindred, salvation was thought to consist in the conquest of desire, in the gradual extinction of the affections. The later Stoic conception of holiness was that of an individual perfection which could blossom and mature without appropriate human environment. Professor Dill says:

> 'In Seneca's rapturous outburst on the gate of deliverance opened by death, making allowance for difference of associations and beliefs, there is surely a strange note of kindred sympathy, across the gulf of thirteen centuries, with Thomas à Kempis.'[1]

The likeness is natural, because the Church took over the Stoic ideal, which was, indeed, the general Gentile ideal. The Brahmin mystics, the monks of Buddha and of Isis, the Orphic initiates, the later Stoics, each in their own way, like Bunyan's Pilgrim, fled from the City of Destruction, content, after a few words of admonition, to leave their wives and their little ones, their neighbours and nation, to seek the Celestial Country.

This Gentile doctrine of individual salvation as an escape from a doomed world was later accepted also by that small proportion of Jews who were found within the Christian Church at the end of the first century. Their mystical apocalyptic outlook made it possible for them to regard the Church as the Israel of God.

Our New Testament documents in their present form, then, would naturally be coloured, not only by Gentile ideals, but by the mystical fanaticism of these Jews—most of them Hellenized Jews—who in entering the Christian Church had for years been persecuted by orthodox Judaism, and had given over to destruction the unconverted world, including their own race.

My first point, then, is that it was natural, towards the end of the first century, for the Church to interpret the Gospel of Jesus as a religion of individual escape from a lost world.

[1] *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius*, p. 302.

II. The Jewish Idea of Salvation.

But turning to the proper Jewish conception of salvation, we find that, in total contrast to the Gentile view, it centred in the redemption of the *nation*. The most passionate longing of the saintly Jew was that his nation should attain to the beatific vision. All his mental pictures of salvation were of a beatified nation. He could only think of his own salvation as a factor in his nation's final good. This religious loyalty to the race is the vital spirit that, manifested in the various literary forms of the Old Testament, unifies it into one book.

In the later Wisdom Books, where we might expect to find a more individual view, there is, again, the same union of religion and national aspiration. When Ben Sira breaks into a hymn of praise to Wisdom, he makes her sing:

> 'I came forth from the mouth of the Most High . . .
> He that created me fixed my dwelling-place for me.
> He said, "In Jacob let thy dwelling-place be,
> And in Israel take up thine inheritance . . .
> In Zion was I established . . .
> In Jerusalem was my authority." '[2]

When the same author writes a hymn of thanksgiving to God, he sings:

> 'Give thanks unto Him that chooseth Zion . . .
> He hath exalted the horn of his people . . .
> For the Children of Israel, a people nigh unto Him.
> Praise the Lord!'[3]

The second half of the *Wisdom of Solomon* is a glorification of God's providence for Israel; and in the first part, which perhaps is by a more detached writer, the conception of final, immortal blessedness is social.

> 'The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God . . .
> They shall judge nations, and have dominion over peoples.'[4]

It is impossible not to associate this with kindred passages in the Old Testament and the *Apocalypse of Enoch* concerning the final dominion of Israel over the nations.

It is this passion of religious patriotism, or patriotic religion, which vibrates in all the apocalyptic books with almost mad

[2] *Wisdom of Ben Sira*, XXIV, 3, 8, 9, 10, 11.
[3] *Op. cit.* LI (A Thanksgiving).
[4] *Wisdom of Solomon*, III, 18.

intensity. Their authors gave up the world to destruction, but not the nation. For them the goal of the cosmic process was the triumph of Israel.

We can see at a glance that this patriotism, which in the day of Christ had already shown such splendid endurance and fertility through five centuries, which later has shown, in the most adverse environment, strength to persist through two more millenniums, was a great force. It was a great natural force, in which the primitive and herd instinct of humanity had, before the Christian era, been consecrated to the service of God, conceived, not only as the one Ruler of the universe, but as requiring from men a high ethical standard of life. I want to suggest that if this patriotism could have been again raised till it coincided with the ideal that Christ preached, his nation would have formed a Church which would have had as its first asset a force of human cohesion that, like a plough-share forged and tempered in the fires of centuries, could have been used to till the field of the world.

There is no evidence that, till long after the death of Jesus, any class of Jews thought of personal salvation as anything else than becoming one of a saved nation. How vigorously the Jewish converts in the early years of the Church sought to retain this thought of salvation we can see from the Judaizing missions they started. In these missions we probably see the lowest strain of Christianized Jew, as in St. Paul we see the highest. How tragic was Paul's reluctant abandonment of the idea that the world's salvation would be wrought by means of a saved Jewish nation! 'My conscience bears me out in the Holy Spirit when I say that I am in sore pain. I suffer endless anguish of heart. I could have wished myself accursed and banished from Christ for the sake of my brothers, my natural kinsmen; for they are Israelites, theirs is the Sonship, the Glory, the covenants, the divine legislation, the Worship, and the promises: the patriarchs are theirs, and theirs too (so far as natural descent goes) is the Christ.'[5]

What a splendid heritage! In the age when Jesus began to preach, 'salvation' truly was 'of the Jews,' because Judaism could give to the world, not only as high an ethical ideal as the

[5] *Rom.* IX, 1-5 (Moffatt's translation).

Stoic taught, but with it the knowledge of a personal God Who could, by His Spirit, hallow the natural emotions and passions of humanity. When Jesus addressed the Galileans as 'the salt of the earth,' 'the light of the world,' he could not have been speaking to men who had given up their passionate patriotism and the hope that their own nation would, by its attainment of God's deliverance, bring about the submission of the world to God. Had they become indifferent to their racial affinities, they would have been unworthy.

Thus our second point is that, at the time Jesus came, the Jews were looking for a national salvation.

III. Jesus saw the Peril of his Nation.

In what relation did Jesus stand to the world—Gentile and Jewish—into which he came? Palestine, in the first half of the first century A.D., was the rendezvous of Jews from all parts of the Empire. Those who came were entrusted with the tribute money due from the Jewish colonies in Gentile towns. The kind of man who travels, and is entrusted with treasure, has his wits about him; and shrewd observant young Jews talking—as youth always talks—with strangers who can tell of other lands, could not fail to know a good deal of the state of the world. What was the problem that in that day faced a thoughtful Jew who was not, as many were not, wholly carried away by apocalyptic fanaticism? It must have been clear to sober sense and insight that if the Jewish nation continued to cherish sullen, implacable hatred toward their conquerors, war against Roman authority was sure to blaze out sooner or later, resulting in the destruction of the Jewish state. 'When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, flee.' Whether Jesus said that or not, it was an easy forecast for a wise man who did not believe that, if the Jewish nation in apocalyptic fervour went the way to commit suicide, God would send miraculous deliverance.

But further, was even Roman civilization secure? Insight into human nature would suggest that a vast, unwieldy empire, kept in order by armies recruited from the conquered nations, must break up, and that, in the breaking up, prolonged wars,

with dearth and disease, would ensue. 'There shall be wars and rumours of wars. Nation shall rise against nation and people against people, and famines.' Whether Jesus said that or not, it would be within the power of a wise man of his age to foresee this panorama of misery.

The empires of the world have always broken up, because these have always rested ultimately upon the power of the sword, and human nature is such that it can never be permanently pacified by the power of the sword. In all ancient civilization the barbarian host was a traditional menace. While it may be said that in the time of Jesus the northern hordes that ultimately swept away the civilization of the Empire were not within sight, it remains true that anyone who foresaw prolonged conflict within the Empire would fear barbarian intervention.

May we, then, assume, as our third point, that Jesus Christ, by the insight and foresight of his genius, must have seen the peril of the Western world of his day from political and social causes—just as we see its peril from similar causes to-day?

IV. Jesus seeks to Sublimate Patriotism.

Three questions now arise:

(1) Did Jesus, like Gentile thinkers, desire to save a few men out of a doomed world? or did he, like religious Jews, desire to save a nation when other nations were destroyed? or did he desire to save the world—*i.e.* the whole civilization—of his day?

That the last was his aim follows from the belief he held regarding God. Gentile eschatology was an inference from belief in the degradation of the mass of men: Jewish eschatology was an inference from the Jewish belief about God; and, as we shall see, the future to which Jesus looked was an inference from his conception of God. It was because God for the Jew was jealous and would in no wise spare the guilty, that he would certainly avenge his own elect speedily. The day of wrath would be sure and soon. The Jewish literature then current in Palestine portrays God as a vindictive, a revengeful,

Deity; sheltering His faithful subjects, certainly; merciful in the sense of giving rebellious humanity a long chance to reform; but, in the end, implacable, sudden and ruthless in His destruction of His own creation. In these books we get God as deified law, and the good as a social condition only to be reached by the extermination of sinners. While in hours of high aspiration these writers of Jewish apocalypse saw the loving reign of God ushered in by this day of wrath, there are passages in which the life of the Kingdom reads as an anti-climax. The awful execution and torture of the multitudes is spoken of as we should speak of the extermination of vermin.

It is not thus that human fathers, being evil, act towards their children. How much less God! The conception Jesus held regarding the future must have been an inference from his belief in God as a Father more kind that any earthly father. While Jesus Christ vividly realized and portrayed the calamities that are the consequences of mistaken enthusiasms and slackness and sin, he did not think of, or speak of, God as administering destruction to the delinquent. I do not labour this point. I believe that no one could allow the spirit of Jewish apocalyptic to penetrate the mind without being struck with the extraordinary contrast between the God of the apocalyptic seers and the God of Jesus Christ. I believe also that the most recent results of Old Testament criticism bear out this distinction.

But the doctrine of God's wrath and purpose of swift and general destruction was the superstition of the soil when Jesus came to conquer them with a more noble faith. This popular superstition, satisfying the primitive instincts of human race hatred, has surged up within the Church time and time again. That does not prove that it is part of the conquering faith. It naturally surged up in the Synoptic records, in the latest of which it is most apparent. The Church of the first century was expecting Jesus to reappear as the Son of Man pictured in the *Book of Enoch* as coming to condemn the world, that the world might be destroyed. That was their hope! It was not a noble hope. So the writer of the Fourth Gospel had to teach 'God sent His Son into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. The

writer of the Fourth Gospel does not believe that the obligation of the Creator can be fulfilled by destruction, because he takes his stand upon the belief that the character of the unseen God is the character of the seen Jesus. Whatever the salvation of humanity may mean in the absolute sense, man in this physical sphere must work it out, and to show him how to do this must be part of the office of his Saviour.

I have thus tried to show that then, as now, it was clear that the world was destroying itself by race hatreds and by the notion that the ideal good could be realized through a military Empire; and that Jesus sought to save, not a few individuals, but the whole world, *i.e.* the civilization of his day, from self destruction.

(2) The *second* question is: How did he seek to save it?

It goes without saying that he believed that God's power is the only true power, and that all constructive power is the power of God. But did he believe that God's salvation would come 'as a stone cut without hands?' as an effect without earthly cause? as the deliverance of divine agencies which would bear up a nation that had cast itself down from some pinnacle created by impossible political obstinacy?

In the documents we have there are two contradictory doctrines credited to Jesus. We must accept as genuine, either the passages which foretell a salvation by slow-working missionary endeavour, or those which depict a sudden miraculous shifting from a world destroyed to a new world created. We cannot, it seems to me, accept both as the teaching of Jesus, unless we believe Him to be confused between the two—'muddled,' as we should say. Both doctrines were in the Jewish world of his day; let us assume that he chose the sanest—the natural and gradual missionary method.

The Church accepted the missionary method. But the Church, nevertheless, has failed to save the world. The failure is not only tragic; it is almost grotesque. Can it be that the Church has really followed Christ's method if it has so failed?

(3) Our *third* question is: What is that essential part of his method that the Church has ignored?

His material was man; and man is a political animal. He is a self formed in the larger self of a group. He is shaped

by the group environment; he becomes a developed self only by developing the best relations, not merely with the other selves of his group, but with the group *per se*. As growing political order gives symmetry and beauty to the group, the individual self rises in the scale. There is an elevation and a degradation possible to individual self and to group; but the apparent elevation that comes to the self that seeks to rise by scorning the group, by despairing of the group, by seeking individual salvation through escape from the group, is no real elevation; for the individual man is ultimately, in this life and the next, bound up in the bundle of life, and *the world of men is not to be saved by the doctrine of individual escape.*

But, in precisely parallel way, the group that seeks to rise above other groups achieves no permanent elevation; for life is one, and while any part is degraded it drags down the whole. *The world of men is not to be saved by empire-building.*

Jesus was preaching, as we have seen, to men whose chief religious concern was the deliverance or salvation of their nation. The *Book of Enoch*, the *Apocalypse of Baruch*, show how deeply Jews of the north country demanded this national divine deliverance. When Jesus said 'Forgive your enemies, and act with princely generosity to them,' they would think of national enemies.

I would, then, make our fourth point this—that Jesus tried to sublimate the patriotism of his nation to the end that the nation might work out its own salvation in saving the world; that is to say, that an essential part of his salvation was the purification of patriotism by unselfishness, the coming of an international morality.

V. The Natural Group the World-saving Unit.

The prophets and psalmists had made familiar to the Jews the idea of the national group as a world-saving unit. It is this essential element in Christ's method that the Church has ignored. So foreign, indeed, has this idea become to Christendom to-day that we need to reflect in order to grasp it.

In doing this we may note: (*a*) First, that when a national group acts as a unit, the action of its members is none the less

individual action because the individual is only one factor in the group. We have all witnessed the truth of this. Was the action of the finest youths of our nation not individual when each of them volunteered for the war? To many of them the full sense of individual responsibility and power of choice had never come till they felt themselves to be needed as factors in the group movement. So, if we believe that it was a national salvation, a national vocation, that Jesus preached, it was not the less an individual salvation, an individual vocation.

(*b*) Consider what international life might be if the ethic of the teaching of Jesus were taken as a national rule of life. Every individual in the nation would need to be generous in his thought and action to every alien and every alien nation. It would not mean a lack of affection for his own nation or lack of care for its interest. The Golden Rule recognizes the solidarity of human welfare. Each man would say: My nation will suffer if other nations are degraded, but equally other nations will suffer if mine declines. It would be the general discovery of the great secret that human welfare depends on co-operation, not on rivalry.

Had the Jewish nation *in this sense* accepted Christ, and understood, as in that day it alone could understand, his thought, the Western world, conquered from the first by a campaign of international goodwill, might have become a Christendom worthy of the name, might long have been what to-day our greatest optimists hope it may yet become. If the Christian Church, from the first and consistently, had taught all organized groups to forgive their group enemies and do good in return for injury, the prayer that God's will be done on earth as in heaven could not have been the mockery that strife has made it. There has always existed in the Christian archives such knowledge as might have made the imitation of and worship of the Lord a world-saving power.

Group anger and hatred, group malice and uncharitableness, have always been the causes and results of group enmities and national wars. These are personal emotions that are forbidden by Christ. Violence in the interim may be necessary; violence may at times be the truest kindness. War carried on in the spirit of genuine Christian humility and loving kindness, *if*

such were possible, might be a saving force; it would be local and brief. But the Church has not lived up to the light she might have had. She has preferred in this respect the Old Testament morality to the morality of Christ; and the great Greco-Roman civilization went down; and the second great Western civilization is now in peril; and the Church has not made the temper of international goodwill a *sine qua non* of the Christian life.

(*c*) Again, Jesus was loyal to his nation. Such a saying as, 'I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel,' could not have become part of the canon if it had not reflected a true tradition. By being a nationalist, Jesus showed how love of nation could be sublimated in the highest service of God and of the world. The Church, on the other hand, sought to build a cosmopolitan empire. This fell apart when, in the development of human life, national group-feeling became stronger than loyalty to the hierarchy. What was the tie of the Holy Roman Empire worth when our modern nations developed? National Churches came into existence, though all professed a common loyalty to the tie of Christian love. What was that tie worth when the noise of war was heard in 1914?

But, taught by recent disaster and present danger, we know now, all of us, that, by the grace of God, there may be a national charity that will think no evil of other nations, which will not vaunt itself, which will render good for evil, and be ambitious only to add most to the universal welfare. If we hope to save the civilization of Western Europe by using Christ's method, we need to realize that a man has no right to call himself by the name of Christ who does not throw the weight of his citizenship on the side of international generosity, international charity, international forgiveness.

I would submit that it is only thus that Christianity can become what we believe it was in the mind of its Divine Founder—a universal and permanent religion.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE NON-WESTERN WORLD: THE PRIMITIVE RACES

By the Rev. H. J. D. Astley, M.A., Litt.D., F.R.Hist.S., Fellow of the Royal Anthropological Institute.

THE subject of our Conference is, 'Christianity as the World Religion,' adapted to all races in every stage of mental and spiritual development. We have considered the evolution of Religion, the place of Christianity in history, and in relation to the Western world of to-day. The subject before us this morning is a vast one—embracing the whole of the non-Western world, *i.e.* I imagine, not only the 'immemorial East,' but also the native races of Africa, Australia, the Americas, New Guinea and the islands of the Pacific—in fact, all the lands inhabited by races in varying earlier states of evolution, as the East is in the later stages of the same process.

But first let me say a word as to what I understand by Evolution. By this term I understand no blind process in the struggle of living things for survival through adaptation to environment, but rather the ever-continuous working of the Immanent Spirit of the Living God towards a purposed goal.

To me it falls to note, as succinctly as may be within the limits of our time, the appeal which Christianity makes to peoples in those earlier stages.

Of itself this is a vast theme, because, if we take Australia and the Pacific Islands and pass thence to Africa, we find peoples in all stages of primitive thought from the lowest to the highest; and yet there are certain broad principles underlying all; and the questions we have to ask are: 'What are these?' and 'How best may the appeal of Christianity be presented to these people?' or rather, 'Does Christianity appeal to them, and is it calculated to meet their needs as no other religion can or does?' In a word: 'Is Christ the universal Saviour? Does He meet the needs of each and every human heart?'

For example, it is sometimes said that Mohammedanism makes a greater appeal to primitive peoples, notwithstanding

its cold and distant Deity, because it makes allowance for human weakness; in this world it permits polygamy, and in the next offers very material and sensual joys; it has not so strict a moral code (although it prohibits alcohol, which for these peoples is certainly a good thing); it lays no stress on sin, and it teaches that man is the sport of Fate—*che sarà, sarà*—that it is therefore of no use to struggle, to try to overcome adverse circumstances, and, by a shrug of the shoulders and a muttered 'kismet,' it kills initiative and encourages sloth. In proof of this assertion we are pointed to the undoubted spread of Mohammedanism in Africa of late. 'It suits the native,' we are told, 'and falls in with the natural indolence of his disposition.'

Can Christianity, then, in spite of its insistence on monogamy, its stress on sin, its stricter moral code, make a stronger appeal to the native mind by virtue of its doctrine of the Saviour-God, of immortality, of divine help to be gained whereby Fate may be overcome and circumstance conquered, and by its offer of various rites—which we call 'Means of Grace'—and which have their analogues in ideas that are natural to him because they fall in with his own habit of mind, through which this divine help may be obtained?

The first necessity is to grasp the underlying ideas and principles of these primitive peoples to which Christianity may make its appeal with some hope of success. To ascertain these is the first duty of the missionary—indeed of any who would teach and raise them to a higher level of culture. Like St. Paul at Lystra or at Athens, we must know whom we are addressing and how to do it, if we are to reach the heart, *i.e.* to touch the sphere of the sub-conscious personality lying beneath phenomena. Hence every missionary should be first and foremost an Anthropologist; only so will he be a capable builder on a foundation laid ready to his hand. As Mr. S. A. Cook points out in his *Study of Religions*, pp. 308—312, 'Any teaching for the benefit of an environment must necessarily be shaped so that it is applicable to the life and thought of the community . . . so missionary enterprise in ancient and modern times has been successful when a certain adjustment has been effected between the new and the old . . . and since this allows us to gain a better understanding of a level other than our own, we are

widening ours, and thus contributing to our own psychical development . . . The principle may be illustrated from a recent work (*Missionary Methods—St. Paul's and Ours*, 1912, by the Rev. R. A. Allen), which points out that the essential difference between St. Paul's missionary methods and ours lies in the fact that he seems to have encouraged the communities he founded to be independent, to act on their own initiative, and so to exercise their own responsibility. The apostle appears to have assisted each environment to adjust his teaching to itself, to have recognized and accepted what was not contrary to the spirit of his teaching, and to have implanted that spirit in such a way that religious " colonies," as it were, speedily grew up.'

Let us see, then, what one such missionary says, who worked for years among the Ba-ila of Northern Rhodesia in combination with one of our fine British magistrates, who died unfortunately before the book was published: 'We wish to say that we studied the Ba-ila, not as curious zoological specimens, but as fellow men and women. We have devoted some of our best years to their improvement . . . and to all who would follow us we would say: Learn to look at the world through the eye of your people, make their language and ways of thinking as much as possible your own, saturate yourself in their folklore; at the same time respect the sanctities of native life, and remember that these people are flesh and blood and soul even as you are.'

These are wise words, learnt in the school of modern psychology, far as the poles asunder from the old manner of the missionary's approach; and the result is seen not only in a book which is one of the most valuable studies of native life that we know, but also in the proofs it gives of the tangible effect of such methods in the uplifting of the people so studied.[1]

What, then, are the religious ideas through which we may work upon the primitive peoples? The answer to this question depends upon what we mean by 'Religion.' Many and various are the definitions that have been proposed; here, in Oxford, we do not need to be reminded of Matthew Arnold's:

'Religion is morality touched by emotion';

[1] Smith and Dale: *The Ila-speaking Peoples of Northern Rhodesia*, Vol. I, pp. xi and xiii.

but this hardly covers our ground; the simplest definition is that given by Sir E. B. Tylor:

> 'Religion is the belief in spiritual things';

Sir J. G. Frazer carries us further:

> 'By religion I understand a propitiation or conciliation of powers superior to man, which are believed to direct and control the course of nature and human life';

that of Durkheim carries us further still:

> 'A religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, *i.e.*, things set apart and forbidden';

but a long road has been traversed before we arrive at this point.[2]

At the root of all religion, it is agreed to-day, lies what is called 'Animism,' *i.e.* the doctrine of souls, that all things are alive, from which the next stage brings us to the doctrine of spirits, *i.e.* that all things are alive, not simply, or, as it were, inherently, but because they enshrine, so to say, and are the dwelling of, supra-normal beings called spirits. This is the seed of religion.

Even in Australia, where among certain tribes the idea of an 'All-Father' is found, altogether outside any possibility of missionary influence—it is necessary to emphasize this, because elsewhere, as among the Ba-ila, the idea of a Supreme Being is certainly not native but, as the very name *Leza* (evidently from the Portuguese pronunciation of Jesus) shows, is due to such influence—the notion has apparently grown out of the unifying of the ancestral spirits supposed to have lived in the 'Alcheringa' times. The process here is exactly analogous to that which took place in Hebrew thought, in which the primitive 'Elohim,' the powers and forces of Nature, the spirits animating her in all her varying aspects, become sublimated into One, so that it became possible to use the verb in the singular with the noun in the plural, and to say 'Barà Elohim,' and translate 'God created.'

Thus, look where you will among these primitive peoples with whom we are concerned—we will go more into detail presently—we find (1) at the basis of their religion Animism, and

[2] Tylor: *Primitive Culture*, 4th Edition, Vol. I, p. 424. Frazer: *The Golden Bough*, 3rd Edition, Part I, The Magic Art, Vol. I, p. 222. Durkheim: *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, Book I, p. 42.

(2) at the basis of their social system Totemism, more or less developed, and these two great systems, apart or in combination, are marked by thoughts and feelings to which Christianity cannot but make a powerful appeal.

First of all, associated with animism, there is the thought of immortality—or rather, perhaps, of the persistence, the continuity, of life. That which has once had life, and all things are alive, lives for ever. Life cannot be destroyed. But human beings die, to say nothing of the lower creatures; our fellows die all around us; we feel in ourselves the seeds of death as far as this present stage of being is concerned; what then? Death is not part of the order of nature; it must be the result of evil magic, and the man or thing through whom the evil magic has been wrought must be sought out and in their turn destroyed.[3]

Herein some have found the origin of human sacrifice, and of all the sacrifices which were substituted for it at a later stage of culture. The Australians, indeed, among whom the thought of the unnaturalness of death is very pronounced, had no developed sacrifices; but whenever a death occurred, the 'Wirreenun,' or magician, was called in to find and punish the guilty. Sir J. G. Frazer deals with this subject in his Gifford Lectures, 1911—12, '*The Belief in Immortality among Primitive Peoples*,' and to these I would refer, as time forbids my enlarging further on this fascinating theme; but before passing on, let me quote once more Mr. S. A. Cook on this point:

> 'We must assume the early realization of a vague feeling of continuity and persistence, for only on this assumption can we find a rational and psychological interpretation of those features in the world's religions which in some cases arouse our horror, but in others keenly call forth our appreciation.' (*Study of Religions*, p. 202).

This 'assumption' a study of the primitive peoples proves to be correct. Death here is, after all, only in appearance. The spirit, or shade, the real being, lives on; sometimes he becomes a terrifying ghost, sometimes a beneficent genius, but in either case he is more powerful now than he ever was in what we call 'life.' To this thought, to this feeling, Christianity surely has its appeal to make!

[3] In West Africa, *per contra*, Dr. Schweitzer finds that death is regarded as natural, *i.e.*, it is a matter of course.

So with respect to the idea of God, which we find more or less fully developed everywhere. The missionary who knows something of psychology and anthropology cannot do better than follow the example of that great missionary, St. Paul, who presented the Supreme Being to the ignorant people of Lystra as 'the Living God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth and Sea, &c., who left not Himself without witness, in that He gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness,' *i.e.* he presented the One in place of the many, the reality behind all outward shows in place of the vanities of human imagination.

And yet, as time went on, the Church was able to find room even for these 'Vanities,' in proper subordination to the One. On the one hand the old gods and goddesses were graded to demons, identified with the devil and his angels—we see this as early as St. Paul, I. Cor. x—and, inasmuch as the gods dwelt in the north, in the 'mountain of Elohim' (*cf.* Ezek. 1, 4; Isaiah XIV, 13), *e.g.* in the mountains of Armenia in Babylonian thought, on Olympus in Greek thought, that quarter, being also cold and dark, became the abode of Satan. Hence the repugnance which exists even to-day on the part of country people to being buried on the north side of the churchyard.

On the other hand she utilized the gods by making their festivals the days of commemoration of the Christian saints, or even took them over bodily and adopted them, so that Isis and Horus become the Virgin Mother and her son, and so on.

And we may see how adroit she was by the volume of animistic thought which still survives in certain sections of the Church, among the ignorant peasantry of Europe, more especially in Italy and Ireland, *e.g.* the cult of the saints, the prayers and magical practices at holy wells, and such like. To the primitive people with whom we are dealing it is open to question whether such a presentation of Christianity does not make a stronger appeal than the somewhat abstract terms of a more spiritual faith. Hence the relatively greater success of Roman Catholic missions; what the Church of the early days found to be a wise method of procedure the Church of these days, under whatever guise Christianity is presented, may find also to be wise.

We may also note the universality of the practice of prayer. It may be merely the repetition of an incantation, *viz.* a charm, *i.e.* pure magic, or it may be merely the expression of a wish; but, in any case, it implies the possibility of communication with unseen spirits, and the thought that they care for man and will help him under certain circumstances.

When, instead of being offered to the many it is addressed to the One, we see a real evolution. Hence even Mohammedanism is an advance, but it is just here that it comes into direct conflict with Christianity.

Not to enlarge further on these points, we come to that on which I desire to lay special stress, *viz.* that it is in the sacramental rites of the Church that we may find that on which she may found her strongest appeal; and for this reason, that wherever we look among the primitive peoples, we find certain rites and ceremonies which have their analogues in those sacramental rites, and thus, that just as the Church appealed to the cultivated Greeks as a mystery religion and to cultured and primitive alike with her doctrine of the Saviour-God, so it must be to-day.

These rites may be divided into two classes: (1) Rites of Initiation and the attainment of the adult status; (2) ceremonial eating: the first is more particularly connected with animistic thought; the second may be a ceremonial partaking of the totem object, or a feasting upon what has been offered in sacrifice; but the meaning is practically the same, *viz.* the benefit of the participants or of those whom they may serve. In this connection we must also notice the rite of blood brotherhood, which is very widespread. Examples could be quoted from the whole range of anthropological literature: one or two must suffice as illustrations.

Time will not permit of a reference to the more advanced Fetichism of West Africa, nor to the individualistic Totemism of the American Indians, nor to the various primitive peoples, such as the Todas, the Ainu and others, in India and the Far East.

I will content myself with examples drawn from the most primitive peoples that we know of—though even these, as

Frazer points out, are not really absolutely primitive, but the result of a long development.

Among the Arunta tribe of Central Australia every native has to pass through certain ceremonies of initiation before he is admitted to the secrets of the tribe and regarded as a fully developed member of it. These ceremonies, which are fully described by Messrs. Spencer and Gillen, are carried out in caves hidden in secret recesses of the hills, called Ertnatulunga, which no woman may approach on pain of death, and consist of four main acts: (1) painting and throwing the boy up in the air; (2) circumcision or lartua; (3) subincision or ariltha; and (4) the engwura or fire ceremony. Such ceremonies are universal, though the details differ according to the locality. In explaining the rites performed by a tribe called the Yabim, in New Guinea, Sir. J. G. Frazer remarks: 'The ceremony of initiation at puberty is regarded as a process of death and resurrection; the candidate is supposed to die or to be killed and to come to life, or be born again; and the pretence of a new birth is not uncommonly kept up by the novices feigning to have to learn everything over again like new-born babes. But if the end of the initiation is a mock resurrection or new birth, we may infer that the first part of it, namely, the act of circumcision, is a mock death.'[4] (*Cf.* Rom. VI, and St. John III).

The second class may be illustrated by the Intichiuma ceremonies of the Arunta; the ceremonies vary among the various totemic clans, every individual of each of which is the direct reincarnation of an Alcheringa ancestor, who carried a churinga, *i.e.*, a decorated stick or stone, which was dropped as he went up into the stage; and the spirit associated with it became, so to speak, humanized, and subsequently entered a woman and was born in human form. But he is one with his totemic ancestor, whether it were kangaroo, or witchetty grub, or plum tree, or what not, and he must on no account eat of his totem, save on the ceremonial occasion, when he partakes of it at the sacramental meal; and this is the remarkable thing about it—the benefit is wholly altruistic, being procured for other totem clans, not his own.

Where sacrifice prevails the sacrificial offering is followed

[4] Frazer, *The Belief in Immortality*, Vol. I, p. 254.

by the feast upon the flesh of the sacrifice: this is too well known to need any examples. The object of the feast was to procure communion with the deity, who himself also partook of it, by inhaling the smell, and to gain strength and well-being for the offerer; this is specially noticeable, for example, in cannibal feasts such as were prevalent in Fiji and some parts of Africa: the fallen warrior was sacrificed and eaten that his qualities of whatever sort might be transferred to the eater; *i.e.* the feast partook of a sacramental character.

The ceremony of blood brotherhood is one, also, that prevails very widely: in this case two men, for example, each open a vein, usually in the arm, and drink a little of each other's blood; thenceforth they are brothers, sharing each other's life and fortunes.

Some of the rites are simple and innocent enough; some are cruel and disgusting, especially those connected with initiation, if we neglect the meaning lying at the back of them. It was when discussing on one occasion some of the (to us) revolting rites of the Arunta (see above) that the late Andrew Lang remarked with one of his humorous sallies: 'Wanted, a missionary!' Yes, but it must be a man such as we have described; one who will enter into the spirit of these primitive folk, and appeal to their innate instincts on lines which they will understand; one who will make them feel that there is that in Christianity which fulfils in a better way the inner spirit and meaning of their own savage and barbaric rites.

Now these rites—initiation, ceremonial eating and such-like—of the primitives must be recognized as the germ whence sprang the sacramental rites of the Christian Church, whether these were originally ordained by Christ or not. I think that they were, because 'He knew what was in man,' and that only through the material can spirit have contact with spirit in *this* sphere of being. As a matter of fact the very words we speak are themselves sacramental. But in the process we see evolution at work.

So Christianity goes to these people and declares, like St. Paul at Athens, 'Whom ye ignorantly worship, Him I declare unto you.'

She awakens the sense of weakness, of failure, of sin, which though obscured is really there, as these very rites testify; she points to God, the All-Father, no stern and distant Deity, but a God of Love, a love manifested in the Saviour-God—His Son, however defined it matters not, Jesus Christ—and borne and applied to heart and life by the indwelling or immanent Deity, whom we call the Holy Spirit, the Third Person in this tri-une Godhead, through rites and ceremonies of the simplest kind, yet corresponding with their own: Baptism, the laver of salvation, which with its complement, Confirmation, is the rite of initiation, the death to the old life, the new birth, the entry on manhood and womanhood in the Christian Church; the Holy Communion, in which the partaking of the consecrated elements of bread and wine are, as it were, the feeding upon the totem (*reverenter dictu*) for the increase of the body of the faithful, the feast upon the sacrifice, the brotherhood of blood, whereby all are bound in fellowship with each, and each with all, in the unity of the One Body—and this union, thus mediated, gives both strength for the earthly life of conflict and service, and the sure hope of immortality.

Hence, thus rightly, *i.e.* anthropologically, presented, Christianity will approve herself the one religion for the primitive, as for the cultured, races of mankind.

On the whole subject of this paper I would refer for fuller confirmation of the line herein taken up to a book by one who is both clergyman and anthropologist, *viz. Primitive Ritual and Belief*, by the Rev. E. O. James, in which the author deals with the matter carefully and well, and arrives practically at the same conclusion as myself.

This conclusion is as follows:

> 'A study of primitive ritual and belief therefore reveals, among other things, a permanent element of truth—a progressive revelation. It shows how God, in His infinite wisdom, has led the human race onward, not only in civilization, but also in a knowledge of Himself, from very lowly ideas of Deity to the doctrine of the Incarnate Son; from crude tribal hopes and aspirations to the realization of the perfect union with God established through the "tabernacling" of the Divine Logos among men in His Church, which is His Body. In the Catholic Creeds of Christianity the vital truths of all religious and magico-religious cults find a place. . . . This, then, is the final revelation of God.'[5]

[5] James: *Primitive Ritual and Belief*, p. 23.

The student should saturate himself, with discrimination, in *The Golden Bough* and other works of Sir J. G. Frazer, and, if he proposes to go out, as student or missionary to the lands inhabited by the primitive folk, he should study the literature dealing with the particular locality he proposes to visit: such as Messrs. Spencer and Gillen, Howitt, and others on the Native Australians; W. H. R. Rivers on the Todas, and the Rev. J. Roscoe on the Baganda and other tribes of Eastern Africa, among whom the cow is a sacred animal and whose rites accordingly, though so far apart, will be found to bear a striking resemblance; Miss Mary Kingsley, Mr. Denny, and others on West Africa; Skeat and Blagden on the Malay peninsula; Messrs. Smith and Dale on the Ba-ila, and so on.

He will then have some first-hand knowledge on which he can go and study for himself the message that Christianity has to bear to the primitive peoples, and will be able to present it to them in the most acceptable manner.

As Canon Cheyne trenchantly remarked:

> 'If we call Mohammed an impostor, and the Constantinople dervishes foolish fanatics, we shall on the one hand never commend the Gospel to Moslems, and on the other fail to see what constitutes the vital force of Mohammed and of Mohammedan fanaticism. A similar remark applies to our missions to idolaters. If we ridicule the superstitions of their time-honoured beliefs, we on the one hand increase their prejudice against the Gospel, and on the other fail to understand the beliefs which we oppose. Not so did St. Paul of Athens. "Ye men of Athens," he cried as he looked up at the Parthenon, "I perceive that in all things ye are full of a religious instinct." The word "superstition" never crossed the lips of the Apostle to the Gentiles.'[6]

One final quotation and I have done:

> 'All the results of science, philosophy, and history can be accepted as the clothing of Christianity, for all these leave untouched the nucleus of the Christian religion. That nucleus has ever been, ever is, and ever will be, the same. And Christianity by means of this nucleus is capable of granting man what he needs. The essence of the nucleus is the eternal fact revealed in the life of the Founder—the union of the Divine and the human. This message of Christianity, exemplified in the life and death of the Founder, is the final solution to the riddles of the universe and of life.' (*The Spiritual Ascent of Man,*' by Dr. Tudor Jones).

[6] *The Hallowing of Criticism,* by the late Canon Cheyne, 1888.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE EAST

By A. G. Widgery, M.A., Lecturer in the Philosophy of Religion, Cambridge; sometime Professor of Philosophy, Baroda, India.

THE writer of the Fourth Gospel has put into the mouth of Jesus a claim to universal influence, a claim which is, however, expressed conditionally. 'And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.' The significance of the phrase 'lifted up' may be open to discussion, nevertheless it is permissible to associate the following reflections on Christianity and the East with this claim, assuming that the 'lifting up' has some reference to the crucifixion and suffering of Jesus. With the writer of the Fourth Gospel we connect the influence of Jesus and so of Christianity with his death and passion. The phrase may also have reference to resurrection, and, though we may differ from the writer as to the resurrection of Jesus, we still insist that Christian regeneration of the world is through this principle. Christianity has to bring to the East a fuller and deeper appreciation of the social significance of suffering, its effects on character, and the attitude to be taken towards it to obtain genuine victory over it. Christianity has to bring to the East the message of a joyous resurrection through suffering. 'And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.'

The subject of Christianity and the East, as a part of the wider one of Christianity as the World Religion, suggests as its chief problems: What does the East so far think of Christianity? Can Christianity offer anything which the East needs? How is Christianity to be understood in an affirmative answer to this second question? There can be few whose acquaintance with the East has been sufficiently long, varied, and intimate to give any answers to these questions, except with some reference to their own limitations. The tourist of a few months, and the too often isolated missionary, are both prepared to make statements which the independent thinker and student of

Eastern thought and life will rarely make. The following reflections are those of one who has made a fairly close and comprehensive study of non-Christian religions and has spent nearly seven years in India devoted to an independent study of its life and thought. They are given simply as individual judgments, which if otherwise rejected, may at least form a basis for discussion.

To the question: What does the East so far think of Christianity? must first be answered that of its vast millions only an infinitesimal number ever concern themselves with Christianity. Those who know and think about Christianity may be divided into three groups, (i) those, mostly poor, who come into touch with evangelising missionaries; (ii) those who have received some teaching as to Christianity in missionary schools and colleges, or through literature: these are more educated; (iii) those who for education or other purposes have lived for some time in the West. That the last named are influenced by Christianity is certain, and signs are not wanting that their way of regarding their own religions is thereby modified. Nevertheless, it is true to say that no large percentage of orientals in the West concern themselves much with its religion, and of those who do the instances of the explicit acceptance of Christianity are extremely rare. The difficulties which they feel are similar to those raised by the educated in the East itself, difficulties felt whether the individual has been educated in a missionary college or not. The students in missionsary schools and colleges generally, have great appreciation of the personal kindness and admiration for the character of their teachers. They do not, however, suppose that such kindness and such character are products solely of Christianity. They believe that any of the higher religions might lead to similar results. It is not intended here to examine into the correctness of this belief, but simply to note that the belief is deeply rooted and forms undoubtedly a force in opposition to conversion through individual personal influence alone. Such influence is itself discounted, if, as often occurs, the same teachers are concerned with instruction in the Christian scriptures, should attendance at this instruction be made compulsory. The educated Oriental sees little, if any,

real reason for a change of religious faith: he feels that he can find room for all good within his own. A lack of interest in conversion gives place to repulsion in the mind of the student when he feels he is to be led to it by compulsory instruction. And here I would maintain that he is opposed to what is a violation of the real spirit of Christianity. The abolition of such compulsion could hardly lead to less conversions: it might not lead to more, but it would at least preserve a human self-respect and something of the tone of freedom of spiritual religion. That a Christian ecclesiastical establishment is maintained by the British Government in India out of revenues from a people overwhelmingly non-Christian, and that educational institutions with compulsory Christian religious teaching receive Government grants, are not merely two reasons for opposition to British administration,—they are also two causes for just revulsion from the Christianity of Christians who tolerate and thrive on them.

The educated are also able to understand and in part appreciate intellectual and other differences between their own religions and Christianity. There is much in the practical religion of the East which is essentially akin with, even actually, personal theism: nevertheless it cannot be gainsaid that, leaving aside Islam and Zoroastrianism, the predominant philosophies have been and are distinct from personal theism. Personality is taken to imply limitation, and it seems impossible to consider God, the ultimate, as thus limited. Popular theism and polydaemonism are tolerated as representing inferior conceptions which will be given up by any individual as soon as he becomes fit to understand the higher view. Similarly, immortality as painted in personal terms again seems to imply a continuance of the human soul in the state of finitude, while the burden of Eastern thought is predominantly release from such finitude by transcending it. This is allied with the prevalent interpretations of Eastern thought, as concerned with an eternal, for which the temporal, the whole content of time, is transitory and as such insignificant, even worthless and a hindrance to the enjoyment of the eternal. The result of this attitude is a failure to consider the nature and the meaning of the course of history, and so of particular persons and move-

ments within it. Thus, it is somewhat enigmatical to the Oriental that Christian theology places so much importance on a historical personage, Jesus, other than as a saint and the founder of the religion.

For Jesus the Oriental, who knows of Him, usually has great respect and reverence, but he finds insuperable difficulties in the ordinary presentation of the fundamental Christian doctrines of the Incarnation, Atonement, and Resurrection. It is certain that expressed in terms of an obsolete theology these repel rather than attract. It is not the principle of Incarnation, but the orthodox limitation of it to one human person born a little more than nineteen hundred years ago that arouses opposition. The doctrine of Atonement as ordinarily presented also repels. For the Oriental it is axiomatic that a man suffers for his own sin. The idea that a man should be made or allowed to suffer for the sin of another is rarely entertained since it is assumed that suffering and sin co-incide. That a man should accept that another should suffer for his sin seems unworthy. The presentation of the doctrine of the Atonement as that God is the cause of the suffering and death of a guiltless victim, his own Son, suggests not a loving Father so much as an unjust power. The further teaching that the suffering Son is one with the unjust Father only seems to reduce the whole to an absurd paradox. The ignorant Oriental still believes in wonders, but I have never known an educated Indian non-Christian for whom the accounts of the resurrection, even if regarded as literally true, meant much. He is far too logical to see any necessary connection between resurrected flesh and bones and the dogmas orthodox Christian theologians would associate therewith. There is, however, another reason: the Oriental already believes in re-incarnation, and thus the idea of a return of the soul to an earthly body is commonplace. The notion of resurrection is of course different, but there is a sufficient similarity in the idea of a return, for the narrative of the resurrection not to seem so distinctive or impressive as it does to people of the West.

The educated Oriental is used to religions with ceremonies. He is becoming critical of and is rejecting some objectionable rites of his own religion, but if he uses any he naturally adheres

to those of his community and his habit. He sees little or no reason and has no inclination to change them for a new set of practices. He rarely, if ever, concerns himself with serious consideration or antagonistic criticism of Christian practices.

The Oriental does, however, view critically what he considers the result or the lack of result of Christianity on practical conduct. Somehow the idea has become widely accepted in the East that the West is essentially materialistic and on the other hand that the East is predominantly spiritual. While it may be admitted that the West is by far not spiritual enough, it may be asked whether, to a far greater degree than the Oriental himself suspects, the alleged spirituality of the East is not rather an asceticism induced by economic poverty than a widely spread genuine inner life of the spirit. But generalizations of this kind are always difficult if at all possible of justification. Nevertheless, the assumption of the spirituality of the East and the materialism of the West—at most only a half truth leading to a misapprehension rarely challenged—forms a most important cause of the non-consideration of Christianity.

Whatever the truth as to the relative spirituality, the Oriental has good reasons for questioning the power of Christianity to affect practical conduct. He knows that the East has been and is being exploited for the materialistic aggrandisement of the West. The Oriental of our times has learnt something of the diabolical warfare in the greatest conflict in human history, as originating in and its course mainly determined by nations supposed to be Christian. He knows how little Christianity did before the war to prevent the growth of warlike intentions and the increase of military preparations; he saw how unable it was to minimise or to quench the conflict or to counteract terms of peace as un-Christian as the conflict itself. He has some ground for asking how Christianity, which seems to have lost its grip on Western civilization, can expect to be hailed as the power to guide and to raise the East.

It will be seen that the form in which the second question has been put: 'Can Christianity offer anything that the East needs?' is a modest one. It avoids any implication of the question whether Christianity is the final religion in the sense of

the ultimate religion for all the world, a question which it hardly seems necessary for us to answer at present. Our task is to manifest the spirit of Christian love in bringing for the benefit of others the best we know, in the best manner available in the circumstances, not preventing its acceptance by insistence on worn-out and obsolete expressions, nor on rigid uniformity of ritual practice.

The answer to the question: 'Can Christianity offer anything that the East needs?' depends on how we conceive these needs and how we understand Christianity. The Oriental knows that for the cultivation of the higher life a certain freedom from the anxiety of physical necessities is required. In this connection the religious teachers of the East have mostly advocated the reduction of physical satisfaction to a minimum or more correctly the suppression of physical desires. Those who are generally regarded as the adepts of the religious life look for the means of satisfying these needs to the work of others. The predominant Eastern ideal of a saint is almost always that of a beggar saint. From such a statement Zoroastrians and Muslims in part must be excepted. The East needs a religion which will inspire it more definitely to seek aspects of the eternal and the cultivation of spiritual character in the material and through work in it. Association with matter does not constitute materialism nor freedom from it spirituality. The East needs to be brought to the conscious recognition and to the application as a vital principle, that time and its contents are also factors in eternity. It requires a better appreciation of the contention that blessedness implies the best for the whole of experience, the physical no less than any other side of it. The Oriental needs to be brought to faith in the compatibility of all good values, and to the exertion of the greatest possible effort for the good in all its forms. The East does not sufficiently regard this life as a divine gift. The recognition of it as such does not necessarily involve any less strength and sincerity in the desire to transcend its limitations.

In theory Orientals would maintain that their religions provide for the fullest appreciation of social unity. That claim seems to be open to considerable doubt. But whatever the validity of the contention theoretically, it is evident that the

religions of the East are so fundamentally individualistic that in practice the motive of 'community,' the aim of wide social welfare, is very subsidiary and often non-existent. It is not that the ideal of community is prevalent though not achieved, but that the outlook is not social. Some tendencies to community have become petrified in group individualisms, such, for example, as the Hindu castes. The ultimate idea is the redemption of the individual soul. Nowhere—not even in Islam or Zoroastrianism—is it strongly felt that the ultimate bliss of the individual is bound up with that of others in the social community of humanity. In India there is a call for national unity, but the motive is political. It is not based on a religious aspiration that the people of India as a community will thus advance each with all and all with each to a socio-individual redemption. The East needs a religion or the influence of a religion which finds the salvation of the individual (whatever that may mean) in, through and with the society; just as the spiritual must in part be sought in, through, and with the material.

This predominant individualism of the religions of the East is related with inadequate and in some ways unjustifiable and even harmful conceptions of the significance of suffering and its relations in experience. A judgment that suffering and sin ought to co-incide individualistically has led to the assumption that they do. That individuals apparently suffer without any known sin of their own is not taken as ground for rejecting the assumption but for maintaining that we do not know all the facts. If suffering cannot be associated with the sin of the sufferer in this life it must be due to sin in a previous existence. This is insisted on even in face of the frequently obvious fact of suffering immediately caused by the sin of another. The change of the spiritual outlook of Oriental peoples from an individualistic to a social one requires that the reality of vicarious suffering shall be appreciated, that primarily facts of experience shall not be denied in support even of a supposed ethical principle of justice. Not only do men suffer through the sins of others, a relation which places suffering as a consequence, but the Oriental needs more explicitly to recognize the significance of the fact that suffering may be and is

voluntarily assumed that good may come to others. In the world as we know it, suffering is not only sometimes a consequent of sin but it is also frequently an antecedent of good. Though in a general way it seems impossible that the peoples of the East are unaware of this truth, not only is its importance not fully appreciated in the religions of the East, it is even faced, as previously remarked, by a contrary principle—that of the co-incidence of suffering and sin for the individual. Not by the rejection of the material, not by the neglect of the social, not by a mere eradication of suffering, but in part through the material, through the social, in part through suffering, the ideal is to be attained.

The East is too often represented as oppressed by an unrelenting fatalism. It is supposed that the Hindu, the Buddhist, and the Jain, look upon the affairs of this life, its joys and its sorrows, its fortunes and misfortunes as due to the inevitable determination of past conduct. And it is supposed that these see no course to pursue other than to resign themselves to whatever may happen, without any inspiration to active endeavour. But it must be insisted that all these religions admit and emphasise the power of present conduct, that through it at least the future may be better than the past and the present. Nevertheless it seems true to say that Oriental religions do not do sufficient justice to the fact of the possibility of regeneration and resurrection. There is insufficient emphasis on the power to break with and to overcome the effects of the past. Consolation is sought in submission to present suffering on the principle that it is due to one's own sin : it is not so often or so firmly hoped through endeavour to alter present conditions so as to eradicate the suffering or to make it a basis for the achievement of the highest good.

The educated Oriental most frequently seems to reiterate the views of philosophies and systems of thought which for one reason or another have managed to gain a preponderant influence in education. That is natural and intelligible. It ought not, however, to prevent us from giving due attention to the existence of other schools. Thus, for example, the prevalent presentation of Indian thought is of it as *advaitism*, non-dualism, giving no ultimate distinction of the *atman* and

the Brahman. There are, however, strong Theistic movements which seem to me to predominate in practical life. These latter give considerable place to the belief in the reality of divine grace. But the philosophical will see how such a faith can hardly fit in with *advaitism*. If the self is the All there is none to help it: all power must be sought and found within the self. Salvation, attainment must be through self-reliance: there is no other way. It will be thought by some that here is a distinct need—the need for an admittance of the reality of the experience of St. Paul: 'For the good which I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I practise.'

The East is in need of an educated pastoral priesthood and of some ecclesiastical organization. Pastoral work is generally conspicuous by its absence. Here the East needs an ideal and a pattern to be set before it. The absence of any effective ecclesiastical organization is one result of its weakness on the social side. Each temple and priest, each mosque and moulvi, are far too independent of any corporate effort. A widespread disintegration of temples in India denotes a decline in the few social expressions of religion amongst Hindus and the absence of any genuine social organization to conserve temples and promote communal worship.

In the first section of this paper a survey was made of the attitude of the East towards Christianity, so far as it has concerned itself with it. The poor and uneducated show no general acceptance of it, and the educated raise definite objections. In the second part a number of the chief needs of the East were enumerated, needs which are not met by its prevailing religions. In affirming that Christianity has something to offer for these needs, a conception and realisation of Christianity must be meant such as to meet the objections in the first section. I fear that it must be admitted that Christianity has largely lost its grip on Western civilization; and its efforts to obtain any appreciable, explicit, intelligent, and whole-hearted acceptance in the East have mostly failed. The cause seems to be fundamentally the same in both cases. The presentation of Christianity is and has been for long so much out of touch with the forms of thought and expression of the West, and it

may be doubted whether it has ever yet been presented in terms suitable for appreciation by the East. Incidentally, it may also be remarked that Christianity in the West seems to have lost the courage of its convictions. There have been, of course, many attempts at what might be called partial accommodation, but almost without exception with the retention of certain statements of dogmas which in such forms are anachronisms in the West and entirely alien to the East.

It is perhaps about time that the presentation of Christian teaching as to divine personality took a form more philosophical and related to modern scientific conceptions of the world and less in relation to the literature of the history of the Jewish people. To-day Christian Theism must be presented to the West and to the East not dogmatically but in an appeal to the intelligence of increasingly educated peoples. Especially with regard to the East it is to be seriously asked whether Christian ideas of God should be allied with Jewish literature or whether just as the early Christians took over these scriptures of the Hebrews, so also the scriptures of the Eastern peoples should be taken as the basis in relation with which the Christian ideas are to be developed. As with the Hebrew scriptures, so here also will be found similarities and also differences. Some of these differences will probably be such that they are opposed to the ideal conception, differences due to errors of earlier thought. But other differences will bring new ideas, new emphasis on and new relations between ideas. The West finds it more and more impossible to accord any significant value to interpretations of the doctrine of the Incarnation such as those of the orthodox creeds and theological manuals, which emphasize a metaphysical distinction between Jesus and other men. Such interpretations often have no general practical effect, yet sometimes they alienate men of intelligence and good will, if insisted on as necessary for Christianity. The simple presentation of Jesus personally and in his teaching as the highest incarnation of divine love, the least inadequate revelation of the divine, seems the form in which the West may be attracted to the spiritual values He reveals. That appears to me the only acceptable form of presentation of the incarnation to the East. For the East, however,

it is necessary to bring into more prominence the implication that matter is a means through which the divine expresses itself.

The incarnation in Jesus has relation, with reference to the conception of God, with the crucifixion and suffering, and this again with resurrection. The doctrine of atonement as expressed in stereotyped phraseology, as implied in many prayers and hymns, arouses more and more opposition in the West, and is intolerable to an educated Oriental. Yet the fundamental implications of dying to live, of the significance of suffering in human development, of the increase of social solidarity and the triumph of love through suffering—these truths perhaps more than all others the East needs to be made more explicitly conscious of. The idea of divine incarnation is sufficiently common in the East and should be made a point of contact for the introduction of the Christian conception. So again, although the significance and importance of vicarious suffering is altogether insufficiently appreciated, the divine avatars, of Vishnu, for example, are considered to have performed saving works for humanity and the world.

Intelligent and earnest men in the West do not wish to trouble those who can find any satisfaction in the story of an empty tomb: for them the power of resurrection, the possibility of death to the evil and rebirth to newness of life, are of the very essence of Christianity and fundamental to the welfare of mankind. Compared with the reality of that possibility, the belief in a revivification of Jesus' physical body or of our own seems insignificant. The East needs to assimilate this principle of resurrection, and permeate the whole of its life with this conviction.

The Oriental mind is devotional, contemplative, and has a capacity for the aesthetic. The religion it demands must do justice to all these characteristics. The East has much in its own religions which must be preserved on all these sides. To wish to take away its forms of ritual seems radically wrong. It may well be that these become apparently trivial, but so may Christian or any forms for those who have not lived into them. Surely the ritual of a Vaishnavite temple, based on the idea of

homage to a king, may express and cultivate the spirit of loyalty and submission. The objection may be made that the practices involve idolatry. Yet let it be remembered that with that degree with which one condemns the bad influence of ugly images, with that degree one might approve the influences of images which suggest beauty and glory. So again with music. The religious hymns of the East need to be in the music of the East. And why should the places or worship be poor copies of the little red brick bethels of Western villages, or for that matter, even of our Gothic cathedrals? A church in the East should be as near as possible like the temple of the prevailing religion of the district and its services, its ritual as near alike as possible.

Jesus is reported to have prayed for his followers that they all might be one, and it seems of the essence of Christianity that the blessedness or salvation of the individual is bound up with the whole. Christianity does not deny the reality of the individual, but in principle fundamentally transcends individualism. The East often appears to deny the reality of the individual, and yet it is radically individualistic. The Christianity it needs is one which will give it a spiritual social unity. Can species of sectarianism, can individualistic Protestantisms, which have all but turned Catholic Christianity into a sect; can a hundred discordant sects not at unity in themselves, and so devoid of a Christian essential, bring the spirit of unity, that corporateness, the experience of community, to an individualistic East? Can these same forms of Protestantism provide for the quiet devotion, the mystic contemplation, the ceremonial aestheticism, which the East demands in its religion?

It will be noted that I put the question into the form: 'Can Christianity offer anything which the East needs?' As to whether Christianity will be the religion of the East I do not venture to prophesy. I do not know that I can say even that it should be the religion of the East. Yet surely there is much to be said for the view that we know nothing higher than the Christian conception of Theism, that 'God is love,' and the adoption of that Theism by the East is much to be desired. But are you prepared to regard Christianity as just this principle, and to give all souls in all races the freedom, as their intelligence, their culture shall determine to apply it within

experience? If so, then I should be inclined to agree that in this sense it is the final religion. But if you add any other elements whatever, *a*, *b*, *c*, then I do not see how we may rule out the possibility of a religion which may grow out of Christianity or of the East which may have not merely love as the central principle and the elements *a*, *b*, *c*, but also *d*, *e*, *f*, *g*, and so on. I would place the problem in the form of a dilemma: Either you must regard Christianity as a religion simply as the implications of God is love, or in admitting something more in religion you cannot rule out the possibility of a higher religion than the present Christian complex. And if so, it may be the East which, developing its religions with Christian contributions, may give us that religion. For the present it is our duty to give to the East all that is good that Christianity has to offer, not robbing it of any portion thereof by obsolete forms of doctrinal statement or limiting its spirit by mechanical uniformity of practice. Whether the East becomes 'converted' and calls itself Christian is a matter with which it is not necessary to concern ourselves. For the rest, for our own good, for human progress—both of East and West—let us also receive all the good that the East can give us.

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In view of questions raised in the discussion of the above paper, I am indebted to the Editor for permission to add the following remarks as to my own attitude respecting the dilemma presented in the last paragraph. Christianity appears to be much more than the principle, 'God is love.' Hence I would admit the *possibility* of a higher religion than the present Christian complex. But Christianity seems to me the highest known actual religion, and practically we are concerned with that. Treating it as a complex, the 'Modernist' has the task not merely of expressing the faith in terms suitable to modern thought, but also of recovering from the past neglected factors, such, for example, as those for which the Anglo-Catholic stands. The Modernist Christian, as any other, ought to recognize his missionary duty to convey to others the values of his faith. It has been one purpose of the above paper to suggest some of these values of which the East appears to be in need.

THE FINALITY OF CHRISTIANITY

By Professor W. R. Matthews, D.D., King's College, London.

THE subject on which I have been asked to speak does not err on the score of narrowness. In order that I may escape the temptation to vague and profitless speculation, I will begin by defining the question which in this paper I shall, however imperfectly, attempt to discuss. Since I have no prophetic gifts, I will not trouble you with any conjectures that I may have formed concerning the immediate future of the world and of religion, but will turn to that fundamental problem which, I conceive, is intended to be raised by the title—the claim of Christianity to be the absolute and final religion. I intend to make some suggestions both as to the grounds on which and the sense in which this claim may be upheld.

That historical Christianity has asserted its own finality is clear whether we look for it in the formative documents of the faith or in the religious experience of Christians in all ages. But the claim has frequently been made in a form which is untenable even on the evidence afforded by the history of the Christian Church. It has been supposed that finality and immutability belonged to the theological formulations of a school or an epoch, and Calvin, no less than the Fathers of the Council of Trent, were each under the delusion that they were erecting an edifice that would endure for ever. It is abundantly evident, however, that theology cannot stand immune from the mutability of human thought; that it has changed with the variations of the mental atmosphere, and that this process will continue whether we like it or not. We are compelled, therefore, to make a distinction between the form and the content of the Christian faith, and confine our assertion of absoluteness to that abiding truth which has been, with varying degrees of adequacy, interpreted by theology. Indeed I am inclined to think that we should do well, in order to avoid misunderstanding, to speak not of the finality of Christianity, but of the finality of Christ, and to ask not with Professor Troeltsch, 'Art thou *it* that should come?' but with John the Baptist, 'Art thou *he* that should come?'

But we are probably the first generation of Christians to whom the serious possibility has presented itself that the Christian religion itself may be only a transitory episode in the spiritual pilgrimage of mankind, and that the claim to possess an absolute insight may be in every sense false. This doubt is forced upon us by the evolutionary method of study. Evolution is the enemy of finality. By its very nature it seems to negate absoluteness. That is indeed most evident if we adopt a naturalistic view of evolution, and suppose that we can explain the higher stages of religious development by the lower. But it is hardly less clear on the other view which, I suppose, we should all accept. Let us admit that the growth of religious beliefs has been, not only a dialectical development, but also at the same time the progressive self-disclosure of a super-human Reality. Even so it remains difficult to think that this process has reached its culmination at a point in past history, that no higher or fuller revelation is to be expected.

It is true that we can never reach an absolute so long as our standpoint is purely evolutionary. We have gained much from the application of the idea of development to religious phenomena. It has thrown light upon the correlation of Christianity with other religions, and it has at least suggested the possibility (I would not say more than this) of conceiving the growth of the religious consciousness as a unity. But one thing the evolutionary method cannot do: it cannot give us a final explanation or adequate insight into any reality. And its imperfection is increasingly obvious as we rise in the scale of worth. When we are dealing with spiritual activity, with values that exist for persons and are expressed through persons, the thoroughgoing evolutionist is helpless or a prey to the most ludicrous illusions. Let us take as illustrations two forms of spiritual activity which are not specifically religious—literature and philosophy.

It is possible to make a study of literature from the evolutionary standpoint, to discuss tendencies and trace the changes of form. By this method it is not unlikely that valuable help may be gained for the understanding of great monuments of creative genius. We may be grateful for the knowledge which such studies give us of the formative influences which helped to

mould Shakespeare's mind. But let us beware of imagining that any number of influences will explain Shakespeare, and let us beware still more of taking our evolutionary process as the reality and Shakespeare as a mere point within it. The reality is the personal experience, the insight into human nature, and the interpretation of life which the poet had and expressed in the forms of art. In him the tendencies and influencies of which we speak in abstract terms, and much else of which we cannot speak, have met and 'come alive' in the unity of a personal life. And though the evolution of literature goes forward, it does not transcend him. That insight and experience remain, in some sense, final. But I would ask your most careful attention to the strange case of the philosopher. I have sometimes wondered that philosophers should reproach religion because it finds its normative experience in a historical Person. For if I mistake not, it is something like that which every philosopher does. Take any philosophical system. It is the product of a personal mind, occupying a definite place in history. We may trace the evolution of thought which led up to it, and the causes which brought particular problems to the forefront. And yet, what does this philosophy claim to be? Product though it is of an evolutionary process, an event in time, it is nevertheless an interpretation of the process out of which it has emerged. And it claims finality. However modest the thinker may be, though he may courteously leave place for revision and elaboration by those who come after, yet he must mean that in the main outlines he has reached final truth. All subsequent thought, so far as it is true, must be a continuance of his insight, and that which contradicts it cannot be true. It is not of course my purpose to discuss whether this aim of philosophy has ever in fact been attained, but simply to point out that philosophy, whether consciously or not, proceeds on the assumption that it is possible for an absolute insight to occur within the historical process, and that unless this assumption is made the work of the philosopher is without justification.

These analogies have been introduced with a definite and limited purpose, and I wish to guard myself from being supposed to accept all the conclusions which might possibly be drawn from them. Though the life of the Spirit is a unity, the

aesthetic, logical and religious forms are not identical with one another, and we cannot argue directly from one to the other without first defining their relations. Into that difficult enquiry I cannot now enter. What, I consider, does follow from the argument is that the aesthetic and logical activities of spirit imply the possibility of an absolute and normative experience within history. And that is enough for my argument. There can be no unlikelihood that a principle which we observe in operation in the subordinate forms of spiritual life, should be completely operative in that form in which spirit reaches its apex. There is, therefore, no inherent improbability that the absolute and normative religious experience should have occurred in an historical person: there is rather a probability that it should have done so.

Let us for a moment, if you will, consider this point in the light of more definitely Theistic assumptions. Let us assume that there is a personal God, and that He is, in some sense, over-ruling the course of the world. We should agree, I imagine, that such a God would reveal Himself and His will to man, and that this revelation could only take place through persons and in history. There are then two possible hypotheses with regard to the course of this revelation. On the one hand, we may suppose, with orthodox theology, that the final revelation of God has occurred at a point in history, in a form indeed which is adaptable to varying conditions and needs of life and thought, but which in essence cannot be transcended. On the other hand, we might suppose that the revelation was always and in every sense progressive; at no point does it reach finality, always a new revelation transcends the old, and so indefinitely. Now, the apparent plausibility of this second hypothesis conceals a real absurdity. For on this view it is clear that we must wait till the end of history for the complete revelation of God. Not until the drama of humanity is played out can we know how deeply our partial revelations were infected with error, or certainly apprehend the parts we were intended to play. When the last man is tottering to his frozen grave, or when the comet that is to shatter the world is in the sky, only then will the Will of God have been completely revealed. Only when there are no human minds left to know Him and no

human wills to obey, will His self-disclosure be accomplished. The end is the one place where a revelation is useless, but on this hypothesis it is the one place where it is certain. If Theism is true, and if wisdom and love in God bear any resemblance to wisdom and love in man, we may be sure that this hypothesis is false.

II.

What has already been said has been intended to show that there is no inherent contradiction, and no clash with experience, in the belief that there is already in existence an absolute or final religion. But it is evident that we are not thereby authorised to proceed straight away to the conclusion that Christianity is that religion. In order to do that it would be necessary to develop a complete apologetic. In default of that you will perhaps allow me to summarise very briefly an argument which I have stated more fully elsewhere (*cf. Studies in Christian Philosophy*, Macmillan, 1921). The argument is very simple. Christianity is the culmination and completion of ethical monotheism, and ethical monotheism, though not the only line of religious evolution, is the true line. Let us take the second point first.

It appears that the passage from polytheism to monotheism takes place under the influence of two distinct though allied needs of the human mind, which we may call the metaphysical and the ethical impulses respectively. The satisfaction of the first is to be found in a principle which will give unity to the multiplicity of phenomena and permit the mind to think of the universe as truly one. The ethical impulse, on the other hand, is concerned with the ideal of righteousness, and seeks in the unseen the ground and sanction of the moral values which are disclosed in conscience. In proportion as one or the other of these motives prevail, we have a distinct type of religious development. But there are good reasons for thinking that the evolution in which the ethical motive falls into the background is not the true line of advance. For this type of development necessarily tends to the conception of God as the all or as pure being, thus evacuating the idea of God of all definite content and therefore of all claim to reverence. Moreover, that this

line of evolution is an aberration is illustrated by the fact that it does not really complete the passage from polytheism to monotheism. Many gods and lords of very dubious character sit at the hospitable board of pantheism, comfortably established as aspects of the unknowable One.

The conception of God and the type of religious life which are evolved under the impulsion of ethical need are widely different. So far from vanishing into the vague, the God of ethical monotheism increases in definiteness and is apprehended more clearly as personal in proportion as the ethical impulse prevails. And along this line of evolution we really complete the passage to monotheism. Its God must be a jealous God, for any divine being who is less than the highest must be felt as degrading the notion of deity. It is plain, therefore, that the highest form of religion must be some form of ethical monotheism. It needs no argument to prove that Christianity answers that test. The Christian conception of God, and that religious experience which is normative for the Christian religion, are linked with the prophetical religion of the Old Testament. I am convinced that whatever may have been the contributions of Hellenistic culture to the religion of the New Testament, we shall never understand it if we do not realize that it is permeated by the Jewish conception of God, and in this determinative respect is in direct relation with the prophets. But it is equally certain that the characteristic feature of the Old Testament apprehension of God is its ethical nature. There is a strange, an even disconcerting absence of interest in metaphysical questions, but there is a profound and unique concern with the problems of righteousness. Historically, Christianity is the culmination of the great movement towards ethical monotheism. But have we good grounds for believing that Christianity is not only the culmination, but the consummation of ethical monotheism? In other words, can we say that in Christianity problems which other forms leave unsolved find a resolution, and practical imperfections are abolished? I believe that we can make this assertion, and I will briefly indicate some considerations which appear to me to justify us in holding that there cannot be any advance along the line of ethical monotheism which would lead us away from the fundamental

Christian affirmations. First, in Christianity the ethical conception of God becomes coherent. It is not so easy as we sometimes assume to think out the idea of a righteous God. I do not mean that there are grave difficulties arising from the existence of evil, but rather that the conception itself is not easy to make self-consistent. So long as we think of goodness as consisting of a series of qualities indefinitely related to one another, we are in a perplexity. Courage, for example, is a cardinal virtue: but in what sense can we attribute courage to God? In the Christian faith this difficulty is solved. For it the ethical values are not a series of independent qualities, but radiations from a central source. 'Love is the fulfilling of the law.' To think of God as perfectly righteous, then, means to think of Him as Holy Love; and that, though it undoubtedly gives rise to serious problems when we are confronted with the facts of pain and sin, is an idea which has no inherent contradiction.

Again, there is an imperfection which seems to dog that type of religion which finds God through conscience. It is the tendency to remove the Deity further and further from the world and from man. The reason is obvious. In proportion as we insist upon the holiness of God we are impelled to think of Him as separate from this muddy and muddled sphere of ours. Pantheism may believe in incarnation, but it does not matter, for it has no God whose incarnation would make the smallest difference. It is the glory of Christianity that it has brought the idea of incarnation within the ambit of ethical monotheism, and thereby removed its reproach. It has shown us that incarnation is not an impossibility for ethical theism, but I had almost said a deduction from it. God, Who is Holy Love, must draw near to men. Because He is righteous personality, He can manifest Himself in a righteous human person, and a perfect life of love is the sufficient disclosure of His nature.

It is impossible for me to elaborate the line of thought which I have suggested. A similar argument might be developed in connexion with the conception of the Kingdom of God as the highest good, an ideal which emphasizes the essential element in true progress, the growing perfection of intercourse between persons, while remaining adaptable to the changing exigencies

of particular social situations. We might dwell upon the manner in which the Gospel translates finally the persistent themes of religion, redemption and communion out of the sphere of magic into that of morals. Finally, I say, even though theology has too often failed to do justice to that content of spiritual truth which it is its office to make explicit. I may leave these points undeveloped with the better conscience because Mr. Emmett has already touched upon them with great lucidity. Their importance in my argument is simply this. They represent the completion of the thesis of ethical monotheism. Take away the specifically Christian beliefs, remove the idea of incarnation, of redemption, of the Kingdom of God, of the thought of God as Holy Love, in the interests of simplicity, and you will find that, in the long run, you have not made it easier to accept ethical monotheism, but more difficult. You will have opened the way for the re-entry of logical inconsistencies and practical imperfections, which will in the end destroy your belief in a righteous God. If you agree that the final religion must be some form of ethical monotheism, you must, I think, also agree that the final religion must be some form of Christianity.

III.

And now, if I were to deal faithfully with my subject, I ought to join in the pursuit of a hare that has recently been started in Italy, though, like many other hares, it is of German ancestry. It would be my duty to consider the contention of Benedetto Croce that religion itself is not absolute, but is simply philosophy speaking in parables, and destined to be supplanted by the conceptual constructions of speculative thought. Since I have not time, even if I were able, to be profound, I must content myself with being impertinent. That deplorable old cynic, Thomas Hobbes, once remarked about people who call for right reason to decide a controversy that by right reason they do 'commonly mean their own.' It is not cynical, I hope, to suppose that when Croce calls upon philosophy to supplant religion by philosophy he means his own. But it must be said, with all due recognition of his brilliant dialectic and original applications, his philosophy is in essentials no new thing. It is the very ancient and respectable theory of immanence car-

ried to its extreme limit. It is pantheism in a new disguise; and like all such systems it fails where Christianity succeeds. It offers no guidance for life and no interpretation of life's task because it has given little weight to the moral consciousness, and shows little appreciation of man's moral situation. It will not supplant a faith which offers a God Whom men can love and worship and a goal that they can rationally pursue.

I will not attempt to sum up the argument of my paper. In essence its contention has been that the task of the future is not to transcend Christianity, but to understand it and to interpret it. I am very sure that we have much to learn from other faiths and from philosophy and science. We must be prepared to listen to prophets who come to us in strange garb and speaking strange things. God has spoken and is speaking by many more prophets and in more divers manners than we knew. Our theology must launch out into the deep of religious history. But when all is learnt and said we may be confident that it will be clearer than ever that it is in the Gospel that He has spoken to us through His Son.

CHRISTIANITY AND THE FUTURE

By the Rev. W. B. Selbie, D.D., Principal of Mansfield College, Oxford.

THE problem which the title of this paper suggests is confessedly a difficult one, and to many minds it might appear that the best answer to it would be a simple note of interrogation. Speculation about the future is generally idle, and the gift of intelligent foresight is rare. To lay down any rules for the presentation of Christianity to future generations would seem to be on a par with the practice of quack doctors, who introduce drugs of which they know little into bodies of which they know less. I imagine, however, that something rather different from this is required of us here, and that it is perfectly possible to discuss the future of Christianity and its adaptability to the needs of men and women yet unborn without insisting on any permanent forms of thought or methods of propaganda. In dealing with the subject we shall need to face the familiar question as to what it is that constitutes the essence of

Christianity and has made it so eminently adaptable to human needs irrespective of differences of age and race. This will raise the further question as to how far and in what sense it can be regarded as a final revelation of God to man. In the one case the enquiry will follow psychological lines, in the other philosophical, but both methods are necessary in order to reach any satisfactory conclusion.

No student of the history of Christian propaganda in the mission field can escape the conviction that of all the great religions of the world Christianity shows itself most capable of satisfying the elemental, moral and spiritual needs of mankind. The exponent of Christianity cannot only say, *Nihil humani a me alienum puto*, but he can also claim that he is the bearer of a message which men need to hear whether they want to hear it or no. He can speak in a language which is universal, and not that merely of a single people or country or time. In spite of the many and great changes in our human nature which have taken place in the course of its development, there are certain fundamental psychological features in which it remains always the same. The instinct of fear, the feeling of dependence, sorrow, and the sense of sin are to-day very much what they have always been, and still have their part to play in the religious consciousness. These and other instincts in their normal operation have given birth to religion, and every great religion of the world stands or falls by the response it is able to make to them. The response made by Christianity has proved capable of satisfying human nature under the most varied circumstances and conditions. This is not merely due to the fact that the inner essence of this religion has a permanent value, but that it has been able to vary its outward expression by taking to itself lower or higher forms in order to meet man's varying needs. Much of the religious uncertainty of the present time is due to the feeling that Christianity is being gradually transformed under the influence of modern ideas. This, however, is a positive gain and witnesses to the vitality of the faith, so long as the process results in the preservation and restatement of those elements in the Christian faith which are permanent and effective. It therefore becomes increasingly necessary to determine just what these elements are.

Discussions on the essence of Christianity have for long been a pre-occupation of theologians both in this country and in Germany. They have agreed in seeking to discover behind the various dogmatic and ecclesiastical expressions of the faith a substratum of religious and ethical truth which could be regarded at once as final and as capable of development. If it is absolute it is so in a dynamic rather than in a static sense. It represents Christianity as life, or rather as power to live, and so as capable of taking to itself very varied forms of expression to meet the demands of man's growing intelligence and experience. No writer has dealt with this aspect of Christianity so fully and ably as Ernst Troeltsch. His *Die Absolutheit des Christenthums und die Religionsgeschichte*[1] is almost the last word on the subject, and I make no apology for referring to some of his conclusions. He defines Christianity from the point of view of its essential content as follows:

> 'The essence of Christianity is a spiritual unity developing itself in the manifoldness of Christian history, a unity of which the majority is unconscious, and which is first to be apprehended by a historical abstraction.'

He further describes Christianity as 'a prophetic Christian theism' in the following significant terms:

> Christian religious faith is faith in the regeneration of man who is alienated from God, a regeneration effected through the knowledge of God in Christ. The consequence of this regeneration is union with God and social fellowship so as to constitute the Kingdom of God.'

In such terms Troeltsch argues, not so much for the finality and absoluteness of the Christian religion in the sense common to the older apologetic, as for its supremacy among the religions of the world, and for its validity as meeting in an objective way the needs of the human heart. It may indeed be described as final in the sense that it contains within itself a certain dynamic quality, a marked capacity for growth and self-renewal. In other words, finality may be predicated of its essence, but not of any of the forms in which this finds expression. Essential Christianity is a new wine which will always burst the old wine skins. In the same way Christianity can only be regarded as absolute in a relative sense, if the paradox may be permitted, *i.e.* as a religious interpretation of life, a scheme of values which

[1] This work has not been translated, but a good summary of it may be found in a work by A. C. Bouquet, entitled *Is Christianity the Final Religion?* (Macmillan).

finds its justification in the appeal to personal choice and personal intuition. As Troeltsch puts it more fully, we find in Christianity

> 'A current flowing in the direction of the strongest and most elemental forces of life which help to maintain it against the attacks of the other religions which claim universality. As against Judaism and Islam the prophetic basis has more inwardness and greater capabilities of development: it possesses greater freedom and life. Against the redemption cults of the East, the Kingdom of God, of the prophets and of Jesus, is the active and living power.'

And again:

> 'It is folly to believe that for an epoch so deeply rooted in Christianity and in the religious forces of antiquity which are allied to it, there can ever be a new religion. It will stand or fall with the religion it has. The great problem of its existence will be whether it can conserve for itself this religious power, and transmit it with its entire spiritual content to the great new nations now entering the horizon of the world.'

I quote Troeltsch in this connection, because his vindication of the permanent value of Christianity seems to meet the need of the modern world more successfully than that of many more orthodox writers. He will have nothing to do with the attempt to separate Christianity from history. He regards the God of Jesus as the object of faith, and Christian theology to him 'represents a positive and constructive movement of the forces of history itself.' He defends his position against the charge of subjectivism by arguing that man's great religious task is to attain a progressive apprehension of a reality which is ever in process of evolution. Our conception of Christianity, therefore, must be based not only on the investigations of history, but also on our own 'subjective and creative interpretation and construction.' This gives us a system of religious values and a standard, but it does not issue, as is sometimes contended, in mere pragmatism. Such a conclusion Troeltsch entirely repudiates, believing that no religious system can stand which puts usefulness in the place of truth and abandons all hope of finding what is objectively valid. There is a 'religious *a priori*' in consciousness and this, taken together with the historical presentation of Christianity, gives us good grounds for assuming the objective validity of the truths for which it stands.

Troeltsch's position, thus outlined, is no doubt open to criticism both on epistemological and psychological grounds. But it may be accepted in general terms as affording a sounder basis

for Christian apologetic either than that given in the Ritschlian theology, or than that of the older metaphysical arguments. It enables us to see how, in a Christianity dynamically interpreted and adjustable to man's changing mentality, there may be found elements of permanent and absolute worth. This is seen the more clearly when we come to discuss the content of the Christian message from other points of view.

At this stage it is hardly necessary to spend much time in controverting the position that history is not a fit vehicle for eternal truths. That Christianity is a historical religion does not mean that it is necessarily shut up to any particular period of time. It appears as the true and natural culmination of a long process of religious development. During the course of its history it has undergone many changes, and has admitted into itself many morbid and alien features. But its essential features have remained, and have shown themselves capable of adjustment to man's elemental needs. The process is only as yet in its earlier stages. Two thousand years is a very short period in the history of a religion, and there is no reason to doubt that there is a future before Christianity as great as, and probably greater than, its past. In spite of appearances, its essential values are by no means yet exhausted. They may seem to have been over-laid by these alien and extraneous elements, but their real vitality is as yet unimpaired. The danger, of course, is lest men persist in mistaking the form for the substance. If, as is universally agreed, the Christian religion is a life, and has all the qualities of life, then it must be suffered to express itself in ever new and more fit forms. In the past it has shown itself infinitely capable of such expression, and the only way to kill it would be to confine it within such rigid bonds of tradition, dogma or the like as to make its adaptation to new conditions impossible. Too hard a husk can destroy the living kernel within it.

We turn now to consider very briefly, but somewhat more in detail, those elements in the Christian faith which may be regarded as having permanent value. The first of these is the conception of God as love. This is central to Christianity, and the fact that it has been so little understood and taught shows that it should be regarded as the goal rather than as the starting

point of the evolution of Christian doctrine. When we take into consideration all that it involves as to the Personality of God and as to His redemptive purpose for mankind, we may find in it a principle to which the life and work of Jesus Christ gives a fitting temporal application, but whose eternal values only become manifest as it is gradually wrought out in human experience. The objections to it, which are generally urged on the ground of its subjectivity and anthropomorphism, ought not to be allowed undue weight, simply because they are the inevitable conditions of any constructive human thought. So long as we are dealing with a historical religion we cannot eliminate the personal human equation, and we do not need to. Nor, history apart, can we think of God in any other terms than those proper to our ordinary mental processes. So doing we are not shut up to discovering only what God may be worth for us and for human life. Truth about God and His dealings is our goal, and we are justified in claiming that we can attain to such measure of it as is sufficient for our needs. Rightly interpreted, raised to the n^{th} power, if we will, love is a sufficiently wide term to meet the whole moral situation, and at the same time to leave us with heights and depths in the divine nature which no experience of ours can fathom or exhaust. There is sufficient margin here to warrant us in maintaining that this essentially Christian presentation of God is, from any human standpoint, to be regarded as of infinite and unsurpassable worth. Even if it is strictly relative to human experience, it may be claimed that it meets and satisfies that experience in an unique way and opens before it an illimitable prospect.

The Christian conception of God carries with it a conception of man, or of human nature, that will not easily be outgrown. It is not merely that the doctrine of the Incarnation points to a real affinity between the divine and the human that is of great significance for the interpretation of both, but that we have in the teaching of the Founder of Christianity a view of human nature whose chief characteristic is an unrestrained optimism. To Jesus Christ man is a child of God, actual or potential. However low he may have fallen, he is always capable of the highest. In His eyes sinful men and women are not ruined or destroyed, but rather lost, *i.e.* out of their right place, not

fulfilling their proper function, but for that very reason able to be restored. There is something in man of infinite worth in the sight of God, and the Christian doctrine of the Cross, however we may interpret it, at least witnesses unmistakably to this. The same high valuation of man emerges in the ethical teaching of Jesus. Its assumed impracticability is but the witness to its idealism, and the demands which it makes of human nature are not, as is often suggested, a counsel of despair, but rather an indication of the high hopes that may be entertained of men. The abrogation by Jesus of all merely legalistic ethics, and the judgment of conduct by inner motives rather than by outward acts, sets before us an ideal whose attainment is remote enough. We need go no further to discover in Christianity an element of infinite and absolute value. To quote Troeltsch again:

> 'The Christian Ethic alone, on the ground of its personal Theism, has a conception of personality unmarred by naturalism and pessimism. On the ground of its belief in a divine love, all embracing, it alone provides a really indestructible socialism. Only the Christian ethic brings with it something which no ordering of the community, however just and rational, can completely supply, because in that ordering there still remain the incalculable elements, suffering, want and sickness. Charity in the Christian sense alone can provide against these.'

Much the same may be said with regard to the Christian conception of life. Here again the teaching of Jesus is revolutionary. He enlarged the content and heightened the value of the term life, and showed how it could only be rightly interpreted, *sub specie aeternitatis*. This material existence is but a very small part of life as He understood it. Bread and possessions are the merest accessories. There is a more abundant life by the attainment of which alone man fulfils his true destiny. Jesus Himself came to bring life and immortality to light by His Gospel. His revelation of the future set the present and all belonging to it in its true proportions, and so widened man's horizon and corrected his perspective as to set him in a new relation to God on the one hand, and to the things of time and sense on the other. Here again we have a principle which, in other religions, is dimly felt after, and in Christianity is set forth in terms easily adaptable to man's growing needs. We cannot claim that the last word has been said regarding the future life either to man's intelligence or to his curiosity, but

in the Christian conception of life eternal there is enough for faith and hope and love.

To these considerations we may add the fact that Christianity provides a solution of the riddle of the Universe on the intellectual side. Though it cannot perhaps be regarded as final, it forms a good working hypothesis which will stand the test of experience and helps us to 'make sense' of things. Even in the warped and inadequate forms under which it has too often been presented, it has proved its power, and there is no reason to doubt that it will be able to adjust itself to the new knowledge and deeper insight of the future. This, however, will only be possible so long as full liberty of interpretation is secured to Christian theology. Fixed dogmas and rigid forms of belief are quite incompatible, not only with this liberty, but with certain fundamental Christian assumptions. Chief among these is the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, which means that God is ever active in revelation and ever leading men nearer to the truth. The open mind, and the readiness to regard all religious truth as of the nature of hypothesis and capable of verification and expansion, is a necessary element in the faith of a Christian. It is, as we have already seen, generally admitted that Christianity is a life rather than a creed. Its future, therefore, will be secure and fruitful just in so far as it remains alive and capable of growth. To this end it must be patient of restatement and refuse to be tied down to any unalterable forms. This is no doubt the harder way, especially hard in a time of intellectual unrest like the present, when the stream runs strongly in the direction of reaction and obscurantism. But under no other conditions is a living and progressive faith possible. The individual Christian enters into a real communion with God in Jesus Christ that he may be guided into all the truth. He has to press on towards the mark, keeping before him an ideal as yet unrealized, but not necessarily unrealizable. When it is realized, when the Kingdom of God has come, will be time enough to speculate as to the next stage in revelation. For the present men have enough to do to live up to the light they have.

> 'God may have other words for other worlds;
> But for this world the word of God is Christ.'

MOHAMMEDANISM

By the Rev. R. F. McNeile, M.A., sometime Student of Christ Church, Oxford.

THE moral and spiritual potentiality of a religion must in the long run be judged by its fundamental conception of God and of man. This applies equally to an *a priori* judgment based on the teachings of its founder, and also, though this involves a much harder task, on an analysis of the belief about God which is actually, though to a large extent unconsciously, responsible for the motive force at work in peoples that profess the religion after centuries of assimilation. I confess at the outset that I am more prepared to discuss the former than the latter, as such experience as I have had of first-hand contact with Moslem countries has been just enough to render me very slow to pass or accept facile judgments on one side or the other. It is, after all, the conception of God which is the one permanent element in a religion. Christianity and Islam alike were originally *religions* and not systems of dogma; St. Paul and Muhammad were preachers, not theologians. Consequently there has been scope and necessity for a long evolutionary development. And if and when it is found that God Himself has been transformed, then it may legitimately be asked whether it is still the same religion, or a new one that has sprung out of the ashes of the old.

Now, both Christianity and Islam start from a preconceived belief in the perfection of God. We on our side figure God by idealizing all that is best in man—wisdom, power, love.

> 'Do I task any faculty highest to image success?
> I but open my eyes and perfection, no more and no less
> In the kind I imagined full fronts me; and God is seen God.'

Then, on the other hand, God in His perfection is the pattern and inspiration for man. To a certain extent it is thus true that we create God in our own image, and then by a vicious logical circle we hold up His image as the goal at which we are to strive. In point of fact this is not so much faulty logic as a grand induction.

At any rate, the main fact is that we seek God in the moral and ethical sphere. At the same time we proclaim Him 'Almighty,' 'Creator of the heavens and the earth,' and so forth; yet here at once the floodgates are opened to endless controversy, and while we accept the phrases we fail to understand them. Every child, and still more every man, is puzzled by the Great War on the hypothesis that God is almighty and nevertheless all-love. We proclaim also that God is 'without passions,' but more than a 'godly interpretation or two' is called for to reconcile this with what we truly and deeply believe.

Islam sets to work in exactly the opposite way. *Allahu akbar.* God is most great. He is perfect in His almightiness, supreme, remote, transcendent. The catechisms taught in every mosque and school to the Moslem boy reiterate that He is aloof, sharing nothing with His creatures; He is subject to no change, 'less and more' cannot be predicated of Him; He has no 'need' of anything material or spiritual that His creatures can offer; He controls all that is and all that happens. So in substance Muhammad in the Quran; so essentially later orthodox theology; so the popular mind to-day. An American missionary in Arabia writes[1]:

> 'The Arab has a religious mind, far more religious on the average than has the American. To him there are no secondary causes. It rains because God sends the rain, and when drought devastates the country, and animals die and men go hungry, it is because God withholds the rain. This conception of the omnipotence of God, including everything, directing everything, silent, inscrutable, and overwhelming, is a magnificent thing. We of the West may well study it, and learn from it.
>
> 'Further, God is not simply omnipotent, He is immediately present. He sees what is done, and His hand shapes the circumstances of the day for good or for ill. It is His favor that gives a speedy journey, and His will that brings delays and annoyances. It is not a light profanity that puts the name of God into the mouth of the Arab continually.'

Yet be it noted in passing that Muhammad himself was no more a fatalist than Moses and the Prophets. Side by side with the strongest statements in the Quran, we find equally vehement protestations of man's responsibility for his own eternal fate. We may say, perhaps, that Muhammad inclined to regard external events, natural phenomena, the issue of battles, as under

[1] Mr. Paul W. Harrison, in the 'Moslem World,' July, 1922.

God's rule and governance, and that this attitude easily slipped over in the minds of his followers to include the character and destiny of individuals. But more generally it is safer to repeat that he was no philosopher and no theologian, and was content to enunciate each side of the truth in turn, making no effort to reconcile the antimony.

Theology began to emerge a century later, when the court was at Damascus, where free and easy contact with Christianity was the rule. Christians were numbered without let or hindrance among the officials, and controversy was a favourite diversion for the Caliph. Then it was that problems began to obtrude themselves. Notably there was the interpretation of the attributes of God, metaphysical and moral. God is said to possess existence, will, knowledge, love, &c.; He sees, hears, speaks. But whatever these terms mean, they cannot be used in the same sense of the Creator and the created.

In our comparison of the two religions it is the moral qualities that interest us most, and of them *love*. That God has love for man is clear from various Quranic texts; but what precisely is love?[2] It is in man the inclination of his soul towards something that suits it, that is lacking in it, from gaining which the man expects pleasure and profit. That is impossible in God; for He has no lack, can experience no gain, nor pleasure, nor profit. Love again involves reciprocity, and that means limitation. Hence the love of God must mean something different from what we commonly understand by the word. The best that can be said is that it means the removal of the veil from the heart of the creature so that he may see God, the bestowal on the creature of the power to draw near to God, and the willing this from eternity.

It is just, therefore, to distinguish thus between the Christian and the Moslem conceptions of God—both start from an *a priori* notion of perfection; but while the Christian postulates moral perfection and explains the metaphysical as best he can, the Moslem postulates metaphysical perfection, and explains the moral as best he can.

Inherent in this belief of ours, and perhaps even prior to it, is the further doctrine of Divine Immanence. Human and

[2] Cf. e.g., *El Ghazzali, Ihyâ 'ulûm id-dîn.*

divine nature are ultimately one. Ideally, at any rate, the spirit of man and the Spirit of God are from one point of view identical. It is only necessary to recall the impossibility of distinguishing between πνεῦμα and τὸ πνεῦμα, or 'spirit,' with a capital *S* and a small *s*, in the early verses of *Romans* VIII, to show how in St. Paul's mind the two were indistinguishable. When we pass, therefore, from our thoughts of God to our correlative ideas about man, we can think of him only teleologically; his destiny is to grow up into the Christ, to realize the potential image of God, and only so to discover his humanity. This being so, the possibility of an incarnation is an almost logical deduction; the supreme sacrifice of our Lord on Calvary is but a sacramental manifestation of the eternal relationship of God to man: 'in all their afflictions He was afflicted.'

To the orthodox Moslem this line of thought is abracadabra, and therefore anathema; his long heritage of intellectual and spiritual postulates are so alien to ours, that the conclusions to which we come so glibly are nothing short of blasphemy to him. May I contrast characteristic dicta from the two sides? (1) 'It is impossible that the Eternal should be commingled with the non-eternal or be made one with it, or become immanent in it, or that the non-eternal should be the place (*locus*) of the Eternal, or that the Eternal should carry it; for whatever is joined to anything must be like that to which it is joined, and only homogeneous things are capable of being united and separated.' (2) 'It is weakness in strength that I cry for, My flesh that I seek in the Godhead! I seek and I find it.'

The *ideals* of the two religions, so far as it is possible, without violence, to abstract them in a few phrases, would seem to follow logically from what I have said. The Christian goal is the realization of the God-character, as displayed in Jesus Christ. And that is recognized alike by the earnest devotee whose consciousness of failure only makes him pursue more keenly, and by the casual scoffer who dismisses with a shrug of the shoulder the dreams of the Sermon on the Mount as wholly impracticable. Opportunism has led us to numberless endeavours which we have excused by necessity, knowing all the time that ideally they are wrong. Exploiting the weak, individuals or peoples, imperialism of the baser sort, at one time

actually slavery, and a thousand and one other crimes of Christianity, have at the very least been perpetrated in defiance of the still, small voice; and we are to-day, with all the decadence of outward adhesion to the Church, crying aloud for Christian morality in high places. Though different Christians may express the fact very differently, there is always before us the figure of Christ a few steps onward vanishing into the mist. Our goal *quâ* Christians is moral.

What of Islam? I am quite aware that any adverse summing up is at once denounced as biassed; nevertheless, I am forced to risk the charge of either prejudice or platitude, and say that broadly speaking the ideal is that of temporal sovereignty. Christian morality begins with the individual and spreads to larger units; Moslem hopes are centred for the individual on the life to come, for the community on power here. This is on a line with the conception of God as transcendent and sovereign. It has been much disputed whether or not Muhammad dreamed of universal rule. For my own part I believe that he did not, at any rate in any sense in which we understand the term. Whatever the truth about his famous summonses to the kings of the earth, his world for practical purposes was limited to Arabia; and there are direct indications that his immediate successors—Omar, for example—contemplated no further advance than the first on-rush into Syria and Mesopotamia. However, that is a digression. In any case the germ is there. Had the Medina period of Muhammad's life never succeeded the Meccan, that might not have been the case, but for better and for worse it did. The Hebrews had visions of a universal theocracy, which repeated failure converted, despite the deep spirituality of the prophets, into dreams of extravagant theophanies, leading to the materialistic notions of the Messiah current in our Lord's day. Islam has inherited from the early centuries of success, minus the spirituality, the desperate determination to establish itself above all rivals. Professor de Boer says[3]: 'In Islam endeavours after moral and religious reform are always involved in political action. The work of a man like General Booth would be quite impossible unless he or his officers tried at the same time to grasp the

[3] Leyden Encyclopaedia of Islam.

reins of political power.' This may be illustrated by the Wahhabite movement, which originated in a violent zeal for Quranic Puritanism, and therefore had much that is admirable in it, but inevitably developed into the inglorious tribal rivalries that centre to-day round the fanatical Ibn Saûd and his followers in Arabia. 'Back to the Prophet' is a retrograde cry.

It is in fact exceedingly difficult to discover in the foundation of Islam anything that corresponds to our own innate conception of the religious and the spiritual. What *is* there, in point of fact, if not of theory, is animism. To Muhammad and his followers the Beduin were markedly irreligious, because they were unwilling to conform to his laws and ritual. To us[4] they appear deeply religious, but after the manner of the 'Indian' with his 'untutored mind.' Actually their point of view is unchanged, for Islam has absorbed the animistic conception of life without transforming it.

But it is not unusual for a man to be better than his creed. And not least is this the case in regard to the Moslem. I have been careful to speak hitherto of the 'orthodox' Moslem, meaning the Sunni; and to him the doctrine of immanence, and therefore communion as we understand it, *is* unthinkable and blasphemous. But from the earliest times there has been a reaching out after something further and deeper. Mysticism has crept in unawares and established itself. It is ingrained in the whole of the Shiite faction, of which I have to plead entire ignorance at first-hand. So strongly did it take root in Persian Islam that it went off through Sufism into unrestrained Pantheism: witness the luxuriant sensuality of Omar Khayyam. It produced profound mystics like El-Hallaj, with his famous cry for which he suffered much: *Ana 'l Haqq*, 'I am the Truth,' or *Ana Huwa*, 'I am He'; denoting a unity with the Divine such as any Buddhist might crave for. It lent its aid to produce the most saintly teacher that Islam has known, El-Ghazzali.

Yet the very fact that the dividing line of Pantheism was so quickly crossed indicates the failure to solve satisfactorily the psychological problem of personality, despite an occasional attempt really to fathom the meaning of Christian immanence.

[4] *Cf.* quotation from Mr. W. Harrison. Supra.

There is an interesting passage in one of the recognized commentators on the Quran[5], in which the author discusses at length four distinct theories formulated about the Person of Jesus by Christians; and this is enough to show that Moslem scholars at one time gave themselves an honest chance of approaching the truth, but just failed to reach it.

Even among the orthodox the feeling after the mystical side is found, for that is the meaning of the multiplicity of dervish Orders. To be a dervish means nothing more nor less than to belong to what we should call a religious society, and many of the ordinary-looking men one meets in the streets of Cairo or elsewhere belong to an Order. Their peculiar form of worship aims at rapture or ecstasy as the ideal, and is unquestionably based on the yearning deeply rooted in man for some closer contact with God than can be found in the fulfilment of the law and its stated ritual. A number of missionaries whose experience and sympathy best qualify them to express an opinion are convinced that in this direction is to be found the real point of contact between what is truest and best in the Moslem outlook, and the essential message that we have to bring.

I have merely touched on the feature in Islam that I believe to contain the greatest spiritual potentiality, and must pass on to consider briefly two more widely-known Reform Movements. The first is that connected with the name of the Indian scholar, Syed Ameer Ali. His name is known far and wide as that of a cultured gentleman whose aspirations for his country and his co-religionists are admirable in every way. His party have been called the modern Mu'tazilites, the name being taken from one of the early Moslem sects that was marked by comparative liberality of thought in days when the atmosphere was pedantically scholastic. On such burning questions as the eternity of the Quran, the freewill of man, and so forth, they took the more rational side. Their liberality unfortunately did not extend to tolerance during their short time of supremacy, but in any case they had little chance to show it, as they met the fate of all sects that were condemned as heretical. It would probably convey more to the average mind if we described these Indians

[5] Fakhr-ed-dīn ar-Râzi.

of to-day by a term borrowed from Christianity rather than early Islam, and called them simply Modernists. There is no need to discuss them at length, as there is no question that their standpoint is coloured to a great degree by contact with Christianity, so that it presents but few of the typical features of Islam and is practically an ethical theism, accepting as a basis an Islam that is as undogmatic as possible. The culture of Europe and America with Christian customs and moral ideas in its train is asserting itself in these circles. This is at present largely confined to scientific and technical learning, and the question arises whether it can prove so fruitful in the ethical and social spheres as to influence for good the whole community of Islam. It is to be feared that the inspiration of the movement is in reality too far removed from Islam for this to be a possible result. Similar questions are, of course, asked about Christianity, but at once we are thrown back on the ultimate question of all—what is the bedrock residuum of Christianity and what of Islam? What does the appeal, 'Back to Christ,' mean, and what 'Back to Muhammad'? As Christians we sum up our answer by affirming that the former means 'On to Christ.'

Lastly, there is the Bahai movement. Here a very brief historical sketch is necessary, though to many of you it will be familiar. A certain parallel to the hope of a Messiah, though not strictly orthodox in Islam, is so prevalent as to be almost universal, the one who is to come usually being known by the name of the Mahdi. Eighty years ago a certain Persian, Ali Muhammad by name, declared himself to be the forerunner of the expected Prophet. He assumed the title of the Bab (Door), describing his mission thus: 'God is One, and Ali Muhammad is the mirror in which He is reflected and in which everyone can regard Him.' He collected a large following of disciples, who were subjected to severe persecution, and the Bab himself was executed at Tabriz in 1850. He was succeeded by one who some years later declared that he was the prophet announced by the Bab, his own title being Bahâ' Ullah. He came into conflict with the Turkish authorities, with the result that in company with his leading disciples he was imprisoned for many years at Acca, where he wrote voluminously, and died in 1892.

His son, Abbas Effendi, Abdu'l Bahâ, was his successor (omitting all mention of a schism headed by another son). Released from confinement at Acca on the occasion of the Young Turk revolution in 1908, he resided chiefly at Haifa until his death some eighteen months ago. In recent years propagandists have spread the faith in the West, for the most part in America, and after making due allowance for extravagance in computing the disciples, there is no doubt that Bahaism has taken a certain hold. The form in which it is presented shows a distinct watering down from the original doctrine of the Bab and Bahâ' Ullah, and an adaptation to Western taste, so that to begin with it has apparently cast off all allegiance to its parent, Islam, and to that extent is really outside the subject of this paper. An English devotee says: 'Hindu, Zoroastian, Buddhist, Jew, Christian, Mohammedan, each can come into the fold of the all-embracing Bahai faith, without giving up his own.' Elsewhere it is spoken of as a 'new religion.' It claims, in fact, to be that elusive will-o'-th'-wisp, the religion of humanity, the 'religion of all good men.' Says Bahâ' Ullah: 'Right living consists in doing harm to no one, in loving one another, in bearing injustice without rebellion, only regarding the good, being humble, and devoting oneself to healing the sick. The ultimate aim is universal peace, which will be brought about by the adoption of this religion.' Professor Browne includes in his book on the Babi religion a most interesting series of letters written to himself by an American lady who attended a course of lectures by a Bahâ'ist preacher and was left in a state of bewilderment. 'According to this doctor,' she said, 'Bahâ was God Himself. He teaches that God did not manifest through the personality of Bahâ, as in the case of Jesus, but that He really was God.' 'No ethics, no religious life, does he pretend to teach. But at the end of the thirteenth lesson all teaching ends for those who do not write a letter to Abbas Effendi,' in set form, professing allegiance. The lectures appear to be a curious medley of psychology, metaphysics, legendary symbolism, with an admixture of cabbalistic numeration and fantastic interpretation of prophecy, leading on to the story of the Bab and Bahâ' Ullah. It is difficult to understand how such lectures as these could win any adherents, were it not

for the intense conviction and marked personality of the preacher; but the power of the movement no doubt lies in its skill in airing the general principles of universal benevolence, stripped in the West, at any rate, as far as may be, of dogmatic trappings, and supported by enough of the fantastic to please the curious. In any case it has travelled so far from Islam that it can scarcely be brought into court as evidence for or against the possibilities of that religion.

If I have seemed to show a lack of sympathy with the tenets of Islam in this outline, I would qualify it by two remarks. First, I have wished to suggest an answer to the hackneyed and superficial criticism of missionary work which says: The Moslems worship the same God as we do, so why bother? It is true, they do; for there is no other God to worship. But what if their conception of Him differs *toto caelo* from what we believe to be the true conception? Whom they ignorantly worship, Him would we fain declare to them. And secondly, I have wished to indicate the extreme difficulty in the way of the Christian missionary, who is confronted by peoples whose intellectual and moral tradition, the heritage handed down to them for thirteen centuries, rule out the commonplaces of our religious thought from the realm even of intelligibility. Doctrinal dialectic is dear to the Moslem, but useless for the purpose of converting him. For both these reasons I have tried to discover the ultimate basic divergence between the two religions, rather than dwelling on resemblances, for only so can we arrive at a position where we are capable of estimating their respective values. At the same time, our religion is not confined to our ideas, beliefs, conduct, or to anything that proceeds from ourselves. Whatever definition is given of it, it involves confession of a living God. And the Moslem who bows before the presence of so tremendous a God, even though in so doing he veils his own eyes, is near to the Almighty Love, and enjoys, though dimly, the light that lighteneth every man. Were it not so, he would be unable to claim the name of *man*. And where he is found to respond at all, be he Shi'ite, Sufi, Dervish, or plain Moslem, there we may hope to meet him, that we may tread hand in hand with him the path that leadeth to the perfect day.

BUDDHISM

By the Rev. W. E. Soothill, Professor of Chinese in the University of Oxford.

BUDDHISM is at least as diversified as Primitive, Mediaeval and Modern Christianity. My task is to explain it in about half an hour!

Apart from Theosophy, a Tibetan development—by no means a negligible quantity—Buddhism to-day is hardly felt in the West. In the East it is strongly entrenched, and influences, mostly for good, the lives of nearly a third of the human race. In China, at present it is stagnant, but when revived it will have widespread potentialities, through its age-long hold on the minds of the people and through its myriad temples, monasteries, convents, monks and nuns. In Japan revival has already taken place. There, neo-Buddhism has adopted our Christian methods—services with hymns, prayers, scripture reading, and the sermon, also sunday schools, charities, and missions. Even in China the hymn has been heard:

> 'Buddha loves me, this I know,
> For the Sutras tell me so,
> Little ones to him belong,
> They are weak, but he is strong.'

Consequently the subject demands study—sympathetic study.

When that wonderful man, Gotama the Buddha, lived, from Greece to China men were beginning to ask whether they were the sport of intervening gods and demons, or masters of their fate and captains of their souls. In India, metempsychosis in its extremist form was the universal belief.[1] *Buddha never disputed this doctrine.* To him it was axiomatic, and it is the root out of which his system grew. Innumerable animistic gods and demons were able to interfere in the affairs of men in response to prayers, charms and bloody sacrifices, so that law became caprice. Disease, pain and death seemed the unvarying lot of all living creatures. The whole creation groaned and travailed together, awaiting perchance the coming of an Enlightened One, a Buddha.

[1] It is exceedingly difficult for a European to get behind the Indian mind because of this controlling idea; for this life is but the latest of myriads of his previous incarnations.

Severe ascetic suffering brought no enlightenment to Gotama. Dying of hunger, he cast asceticism aside, partook of refreshment, and, seated under the Bo (or fig) tree, enlightenment, Buddhahood, came. There, the four fundamental elements of his teaching revealed themselves to him :—

I. All life is dukha; pain, suffering, misery, evil. Pain and evil had been his mystery. They are a mystery still in the West, and *he* had not to reconcile them with Divine Fatherhood. His pessimistic doctrine was not new, nor could its dogmatic assertion alone make him the Buddha. That position he could only attain by the discovery of a way of escape. If he had founded a religion of Pessimism it would never have succeeded. In fact, he founded a religion of Hope. 'Just this I teach,' says he, 'suffering and the ending of suffering.'

II. His second postulate was the Law of Cause and Effect in the spiritual world. This, also, was not a new law, but under his development it became revolutionary and dominant. Impersonal Law was placed above the gods, and in consequence prayer and divine intervention were discounted. Buddha's immediate interest in this law was psychological rather than cosmological. For Buddhism from its start was intensely introspective. Its eyes were turned inward. 'Know thyself' was its motto, 'for the outer world is transitory and indeed unreal.' In consequence elaborate and conflicting discussions have arisen among Buddhists as to whether the universe is phenomenal or only noumenal. Buddha found that every experience has its cause; therefore pain, evil, has its cause; diagnose and remove the cause and the effect, pain and evil, will cease. This cause Buddha declared to be thirst; in other words, lust, craving, and desire. This it is which ties all living beings to the wheel of unceasing life and death. 'Oh! wretched man that I am; who shall deliver me from this body of death?' says St. Paul, and eternal rebirths and redeaths, adds Buddha. Is there a way of escape? Buddha says there is. It certainly does not lie in 'sacrificial and sacramental observances, for these are irrelevant. The cure which they propose, being propitiatory and external, has nothing to do with the disease, which is within.'

III. *Buddha's Remedy.* This lies in the extinction of craving. Extinguish craving, and evil and suffering will cease,

and with the cessation the chain of reincarnation will also be broken. But this craving, this clinging to the self, to the ego, to others, to life itself—so relentless, so ardent—is it possible to extinguish it? Buddha replies, Yes, there is a way to this desirable end, whereby Nirvana can be attained—eternal rest from passion, pain, and the unceasing round of reincarnations.

IV. What is the way to obtain this remedy? It may be attained, not through prayer, but through the control of the mind by meditation, or introspection, and especially in the cultivation thereby of a spirit of charity, of love towards all living beings. Herein the vision of Buddha in a measure resembles that of our Lord, of a social life based on goodwill. It is not an unrealisable dream, if men of goodwill would unite, as our Lord and the Buddha would approve, for its realization. The way of escape, then, is a moral one. For success, the separated, or monastic life is the most effective, but it is not essential, for enlightenment may be attained even by laymen, and indeed by women.

But let us consider certain further propositions of the Buddha.

I. The doctrine of *Impermanence*. In the universe all is endlessly changing. There is no present, nothing but a past and a future; there is no 'being,' only an eternal 'becoming.' With Buddha nothing is permanent save law. And it is law that keeps the wheel of 'becoming' ever revolving. This was a remarkable doctrine in those days. It is a theory also of to-day—with a difference. The 'becoming' of our day is generally conceived of as a spiral rather than a wheel, and if we conceived of life, not as a development, but as a round-about, we too might become dizzy and want to get off to—Nirvāna.

II. Impermanence leads us to *Buddha's Atheism*. Socrates and Buddha both lived when gods were many and not even of 'doubtful morals.' Buddha boldly placed them amongst the 'unenlightened,' subject to the law of inexorable necessity along with all other reincarnable beings. Thus they too were not eternal and immutable. Not even Brahma escaped this law.

III. The doctrine of *Anatman*, or No-Soul. By denying the Pantheism expressed in Brahma, the All-Soul, together with the myriad souls, sparks of his divinity, scattered throughout the universe, Buddha denies the existence of any *migrating* personality. During his prolonged self-analysis he discovered no unchanging essence of personality, no individual soul that came at birth and went at death. Our flaming angel of Reason has driven us from fairyland and paradise, and we have lost our illusion that there are stocks of souls stored somewhere in the sky waiting to be handed out as baby bodies are produced, so we can sympathise with the Buddha. Man, to him, was a bundle of receptive and perceptive qualities, amidst which it was impossible to lay one's finger on any one and say 'that is the soul.' What is a wheel? he asks—spokes, a hub, a felloe, a tyre, but before they are put together, and after they are distributed, where is the wheel? Is it in the spoke? &c. In like manner, *I*, when am I *I*, even in this life? And when a man's receptive and perceptive qualities are distributed by death, where is the soul? Soul, self, person—these are terms which may be used *empirically* of gods and men in their temporary habitats, but not of any enduring, migrating entity.

Nevertheless, as we are here, there must be a cause, or link in the chain of causation. Something must have continued and migrated. What is the connecting link?

IV. This brings us to the doctrine of *Karma*, *i.e.* deeds, or character. Karma is 'the power of deeds done in past existences to condition or even to create future existences.' Our deeds in one stage are the seeds which enter their appropriate bodies in the next stage. The ego, the individual, ceases to exist, but his deeds, or character, live on as Karma. Consequently, a man who is wicked now is so as the result of his previous evil Karma, and similarly a Buddha becomes a Buddha by reason of his previous good Karma. As a man *has* sown, so does he now reap. Nevertheless, and despite explicit denial, Karma does seem to indicate some undefined continuation of what we call personality. It seems to contain something more than the sequence of parent and child, or than

seed and tree. For instance, we are told in detail of the previous lives of Gotama Buddha himself. If these lives be admitted, then it is necessary to assume that, at the end of each successive stage, when he drank the waters of Lethe, some record was somehow kept that it was his Karma which transmigrated. Notwithstanding, we find ourselves far removed from the doctrine that *I* take with me the character I make while here. Was Buddha trying to find the position of St. Paul? 'Thou fool . . . that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be . . . but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him and to every seed his own body . . . it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.'

V. *Morals.* Buddha's doctrine of Karma, ethically considered, seems to offer little encouragement for the moral life or for any help thereto outside oneself. The Buddhas have gone to Nirvana. How can *they* help me? The devas, the gods, did seem human and companionable, perhaps even because they were not all they should be. Since personality is taken from me, and my Karma goes as the seed of somebody else's life—why worry over morals at all; let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we are—Karma—merely a resultant.

But such is not the attitude of Buddha, and with the apotheosis of morals we have the real strength of Buddhism. In the nirvana of desire, even of the will to live any life we know, in the extinction of the *self*, in purity and holiness of life, lies the way of salvation for the individual, the race, and all creation, from the endless round of life, which is suffering. Denying the virtue of asceticism, Buddha called his followers to a non-ascetic life, yet one of simplicity and of goodness. While Buddhahood and Arhatship (saintship) could best be ensured by joining his order of mendicant monks and nuns—for Buddha, after much hesitation and fully recognising the attendant dangers, established an order of nuns—even Buddhahood and Arhatship could be obtained by laymen. For to Buddha, salvation was independent of time, state or place. 'The kingdom of heaven is within you,' said our Lord; and in somewhat similar fashion the Buddha taught that salvation lay within the man himself, independent of forms and ceremonies, and independent of fastings or abstinence from any

class of food, though he advocated for all, temperance in food and abstinence from wine, and laid down strict rules against every form of luxury amongst monks or nuns. His morals are lofty, demanding nobility of character, the surrender of self, and an unlimited love for all living beings.

VI. His *catholicism*. One of the most important doctrines of the Buddha is that his religion is for all. Neither caste nor colour may be a barrier in his community. His salvation is for all, men, women, and all creation. It was, in fact, the first universalist religion.

Coming now to the two great divisions of Buddhism, we find that the Hīnayāna school is undoubtedly the traditional upholder of the primitive Buddhist doctrine. But early in the Christian era a new school arose, which called itself Mahāyāna, the Great Wain, or Vehicle, dubbing the older school the Hīnayāna, or Little Wain. Both yāna are travelling the same way, but one is small and slow, the other roomy and speedy. Hīnayāna is orthodox church, maintaining the older tradition and cleaving to the letter of the law. Mahāyāna is liberal, and has introduced far-reaching developments, which, it asserts, naturally arise out of the Buddha's doctrines. The Hīnayāna carries the people of Ceylon, Burma, and Siam to—Nīrvana. The Mahāyāna carries the millions of the Far East, China, Japan, Tibet, Mongolia, Korea, Annam, Cochin-China to—Heaven.

The Mahāyāna received its first concrete expression in a remarkable book, published very early in the Christian era, called The Rise, or Awakening of Faith. Here we have the keynote of Mahāyāna, exhibiting its main difference from Hīnayāna, *viz.* salvation by faith, rather than by works. The distinctive tenets of Mahāyāna—and they are revolutionary—are as follows:

I. The conception—not perhaps clearly defined—of a Supreme and Eternal Being, who has manifested Himself in multitudinous ways, especially in and through Buddhas in various ages, of whom Gotama was one of a long series, and others would succeed him.

II. The Boddhisattvas, or Saviours. These are beings who are perfectly fit to enter into Buddhahood, but whose love

for living beings makes them deny themselves the perfect state, in order to minister to the needs and save from woe the suffering world. They are ever ready to respond to the cries of the distressed, and to pass on their works of supererogation for the benefit of mankind. Two of the most popular are Amitābha, of 'boundless years' and 'boundless light,' and Kuan-yin, the 'goddess of mercy.' To all intents and purposes Mahāyānism *is* these, and their invocation never ceases. Both are deified ideas, possibly of Persian origin. Mahāyāna has also deified the Buddha, conferring on him all divine attributes, including that of saviour and hearer of prayer. There is a Bodhisattva in every man, and through faith in the Bodhisattvas every man, even in this life, may become a Bodhisattva, or Saviour.

III. A third doctrine, already mentioned, and fundamental to Mahāyānism, is that of salvation by faith. 'Only believe and thou shalt be saved' has its counterpart in the doctrine, only *call* on one of the Saviours and thou shalt be saved now and eternally. The Hinayāna doctrine of long processes of struggle and reincarnation before Buddhahood and Parinirvāna can be attained is here countered by the doctrine of immediate salvation by faith. No longer need man or woman go through agelong torments. Here is hope, here is a way of immediate escape, not by the works of the flesh, not by the works of the Dharma or Law, for 'to him that worketh not, but believeth (or calleth) on him that justifieth the ungodly, his *faith* is counted for righteousness.' There is, of course, no more encouragement in Mahāyānism than in Christianity for faith as a mere cloak for immorality, for true faith produces true works.

IV. In Mahāyānism, too, man finds his soul, his personality, restored to him. There are, of course, different views in differing Mahāyāna Schools—and there are many schools—but generally speaking a man is allowed his own personality, his own self, even though with some schools it be but Māya, illusion.

V. Heaven and Hell. The natural outcome of a religion of salvation is that you are to be saved from and to somewhere. So Mahāyāna, whilst it has emphasised the Buddhist hells, and

exhibits them in every city in China in all the possible and impossible tortures that a fiendish genius can conceive, yet emphasises also the Western Paradise, the abode of the Buddhas and Boddhisattvas. It is the home of the soul, the abode of bliss, of eternal light and liberty and joy. True, there are those who limit this bliss to millions of years with subsequent Karmaic reincarnations, but that background is never visible to the faithful.

VI. Another important addition made by Mahāyāna is that of invocation. Meditation, leading to trance, or ecstasy, a feature of Hinayāna, is by no means rejected by Mahāyāna, but invocation, and even prayer, are its special product.

VII. The Clerical Order. This forms the third element in the Buddhist Triratna, or Trinity, Buddha, the Law, the Clergy. Another Trinity is the Trikāya, the human Buddha, the glorified Buddha, and the Eternal Law; but we must leave these. Generally speaking, one can only describe the monks as degenerate. For, just as it was in the Christian Church, when the apostolic succession deteriorated into a professionally clerical, or priestly, class, so has it been with the simple mendicant order founded by Buddha. In China, for instance, an ignorant body of monks and nuns only roll along the Wheel of Law by twirling their beads as they drone their wearisome invocations, and only keep aglow the effulgence of the Enlightened One by keeping the lamp before his shrine ever lighted. Souls of the living are now saved, more assuredly by invocation and ceremonial than by meditation and self-suppression, and souls of the departed can only be released from the agonies of purgatory by the remunerated services of the priest. Such a condition is not unknown in degenerate Christianity. In China, there are, of course, good and sincere men among the monks, though rarely an educated one, for the mass of them are illiterate, sometimes immoral, and generally almost restful enough to need no further nirvana. Sir Charles Eliot says of Buddhism that 'its pessimistic doctrines and monastic institutions are, if judged by ordinary standards, bad for the welfare of a nation; second, that more than any other religion it is liable to become corrupt'; a view which few will contradict.

Nevertheless, the past service of Buddhism to the world has been very great. It has tamed savage tribes, given unlettered nations their alphabets and literature, introduced art and architecture, developed an extensive and intricate philosophy, and advocated non-resistance and peace. In its Hīnayāna form it has developed the moral character of nations and peoples and brought comfort into the lives of many millions. In its Mahāyāna form it has influenced the morals and given hope for a future life to hundreds of millions. At the same time, both Schools have left the vast millions for whom Buddhism is responsible still a prey to the innumerable nats, demons and superstitions of Animism; they have made no attempt scientifically to study the laws of the natural world; their cosmology is as jejune as their theology is puerile; always and everywhere Buddhism has become the 'opiate of the people,' and until the advent of Christianity, with its vigour, its vitality, its progressiveness, Buddhism has deteriorated into dullness and somnolence.

If it revives and again develops its propaganda, its future success will in no small measure depend on its doctrine of salvation by faith, its freedom from immutable creeds, its liberty of thought and expression, its inclusiveness, its agelong hold on the people of the Far East, and its love of nature as is shown in the beautiful situation of its temples, and in their attractive call to come and stay for a while in peace and meditate—I wish we had equally beautiful hostels here for rich and poor. The magnificent temples of Kandy, the Shwe Dagon at Rangoon, Wu-T'ai, O-Mei, P'u-T'u, the Peking Western Hills in China, Kyoto and Nikko in Japan, and the myriads of temples and monasteries scattered over the East are all indicative of a crying human need. I would not destroy a single one of them. Rather would I have them fulfil the purposes of God in the religious welfare of men.

I believe there are many things we can learn from Buddhism, but on these I have not time to dwell. Let me rather ask:

What has Christianity to offer that Buddhism does not supply?

I. First of all we can offer our admittedly difficult, but fundamental, doctrine of the Fatherhood of God. Reason

and experience convince us that it is a doctrine which, on the lowest reckoning, produces results far surpassing the belief in a host of dying devas, an eternal impersonal law, or imaginary Boddhisattvas. We find sufficient experimental conviction for a belief in 'God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, and of all things, visible and invisible,' whose Dharma is for good and not for ill, in knowledge of and obedience to which lie man's true emancipation and hope.

II. In place of imaginary Boddhisattvas we can offer an historical Saviour who reveals the way of salvation through Sonship.

III. In place of the Triratna, Buddha, Dharma, the Clergy, or the Trikāya, we can offer God Himself in three manifestations, as Father, in the Son, and through His Divine Spirit of Holiness.

IV. In place of salvation by faith through an incessant 'prayer-wheel' type of invocation of sacred names, we can offer salvation by faith in the Son of God and the communion of His spirit and life.

V. In place of a non-ego, or the extinction of the self, we can offer the full development of a real self which devotes all the qualities of its personality for the welfare of the race.

VI. In place of a horrifying hell and a banal heaven, we can offer, along with Divine law and justice, our sure and certain hope of development in higher dimensions, higher attainments and proportionate happiness, and of meeting those whom we honour and love *in person.*

VII. In place of the incorrect premiss that all existence is suffering, we can show that most of life for all God's creatures is free from pain, and that the revelation of divine sonship is actually removing not only actual pain but its cause. To this we call our hospitals and hygiene to testify, as well as the lives of men and women changed for service.

VIII. In place of Karma we can offer the resultant, the character of the New Birth in Christ Jesus, with its progressively higher regenerative powers.

IX. While recognising that all is transitory and impermanent, we do not find it cause for pessimism. All *life* must move and change, and need not change for the worse.

X. In place of invocation we can offer prayer and holy communion; prayer, not as one Buddhist writer puts it, in order to appease God and get Him to change His laws, but communion that we may learn, love, and obey His laws.

XI. In place of a monkhood, withdrawn from the world, as the highest hope of salvation, a monkhood which in practice empties the mind, and makes for sloth and dullness, we can offer the 'royal priesthood,' which works for universal health, and mental, moral and spiritual efficiency.

XII. Finally we can offer them the Holy Catholic Church as the Family of God on earth, in which they may cultivate every family virtue, and in which they may help to accomplish His will for all men. In this they will find emancipation from their animistic bonds and the demon-fear universal in all Buddhist lands.

But how are we to induce the Buddhists, Hinayāna and Mahāyāna, to enter this Divine Family and its inheritance? Misrepresentation, unkindly criticism, aloofness, will not help. The modern school of Christian Theology, with its sympathy, its quest of Truth, its intellectual freedom and honesty, should be able to develop a new presentation of the old effective doctrines. Why should not such a presentation be made by our *best* men *direct* to the *best* minds in Buddhism? Were that done we might avoid the definition of Christianity given by a learned Buddhist, as demanding a belief in 'a creator who produced the world out of nothing, caused the downfall of mankind, and touched with the pang of remorse, sent down his only son to save the depraved.'

There is, then, every reason why the modern Churchman should have a living message to Buddhism, conveying the same old Catholic message of salvation, enlightened by increasing knowledge, purified by an equally Catholic and ardent love, equally filled with the spirit of the Christ and equally energised by the power of the same Holy Ghost. Catholicism is not a set of dogmas, nor is it a ritual. It is a *spirit*, a life, a heart of love, and Modernism can only be Christian by possessing it and going forth with ungrudging magnanimity, to proclaim a real Gospel to a needy world.

HINDUISM

By the Rev. EDWIN GREAVES, formerly of N. India.

A WAISTCOAT-POCKET edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* has not yet been published; a full account of Hinduism cannot be compressed into a short paper. I can only indicate some of the elements which, combined, have resulted in present-day Hinduism; mention some of the beliefs, philosophical assumptions, ritualistic practices and ideals of life included in it; note a few of the cheering discrepancies between Hindus and Hinduism; and point out the reason of its failure to meet men's spiritual needs.

What is Hinduism? I have a collection of articles by leaders of Hindu thought on *The Essentials of Hinduism.* The conclusion reached appears to be 'there ain't no essentials.' One able Hindu writes:

> 'Hindu society now practically admits within its pale all persons who are Hindus by birth, whatever their beliefs and practices may be, provided they have not openly abjured Hinduism, or married outside of Hindu society.'[1]

Again,

> 'You may believe in any doctrine you choose, even atheism, without ceasing to be a Hindu.'[2]

Such statements by Hindu writers might be multiplied.

To maintain his place in Hinduism a man must observe the rules of the caste in which he has been born. These rules vary in the different castes. In some of the religious orders caste restrictions find no place. Beliefs are of small moment and loose interpretations of the Hindu scriptures are permitted; marriage regulations are very strict and are rigidly enforced; among all but the lowest castes questions relating to eating and drinking are of vital importance. Yet one leading authority says:

> 'No rules as to food or drinking are binding. Some of the "depressed classes" take beef and pork. Even reptiles and vermin are lawful food for some of the *musahar* tribes. And even the pundits of Benares have clearly expressed their opinion . . . that these "depressed classes" are Hindus.'[3]

[1] Sir Gooroo Dass Banerjee, *The Essentials of Hinduism,* p. 1.
[2] Mr. Satyendranath Tagore, *op. cit.,* p. 4.
[3] Bhagawán Das, *op. cit.,* p. 31.

I would add that some members of the higher castes freely violate the rules on such matters and if the Brahmans be suitably propitiated such violations are winked at.

These preliminary matters are of deep moment. We have to remember that Hinduism is not one religion, it is a congeries of religions. Among its adherents are saintly souls, soaring heavenwards and singing celestial melodies, and there are noxious creatures grovelling in the mire.

Nominally Hinduism is founded on the Vedas, but little that is Vedic is found in popular Hinduism. Of the four Vedas the *Rig-veda* stands pre-eminent. The *Sama-veda* is a re-arrangement of the hymns of the *Rig-veda* for priestly use, nineteen-twentieths of its contents being drawn from it. Similarly the *Yajur-veda* exists for sacrificial purposes, though it has more additions and adaptations. Only about one seventh of the *Atharva-veda* is taken from the *Rig-veda*, the remainder is matter of a very miscellaneous description. It contains,—I quote:

> 'Prayers, formulas and charms for protection against sorcerers and sorceresses, diseases, snakes and other noxious creatures . . . benedictions and imprecations, invocations of magical herbs, prayers for children and long life, for general and special protection and prosperity, success in love, trade and gambling, together with formulas to be employed in all kinds of domestic occurrences.'[4]

What is the theology of the *Rig-veda*? Is it Nature Worship, or Polytheism, or a highly figurative presentation of Monotheism? A few maintain the last,—one God worshipped under many names. The sounder conclusion, however, seems to be that we have *Kathenotheism*, i.e., each god takes his turn in being addressed as the *supreme* if not the *only* god, the others are for the time ignored. Such deference is truly Oriental.

The gods are apparently nature forces caught in the very process of transformation and deification; mighty Indra, the storm god; Varuna, the god of order, physical and moral; and very many others. As the centuries progressed the gods were modified and greatly multiplied until they became *taintis karor* (3,300,000). In the Vedas the prayers are mainly for

[4] *The Rig-veda and Vedic Religion,* Clayton, pp. 274, 275.

material boons, but aspirations after higher things are by no means absent.

When the Aryans reached India, the conquered races, who were animists, probably retained most of their beliefs and practices, but must have been influenced in some measure by the higher religion of the conquerors, the conquerors may also have been influenced by them. Not only so, the contents of the *Atharva-veda* suggest that the Aryans had brought with them much that was distinctly animistic in character.

Aryan deities and Animistic godlings would become involved in a loose unsought partnership and the way prepared for religious developments differing widely from the beliefs and practices of earlier times.

The growth of priestcraft retarded the healthy development of religion. The multiplication and elaboration of rites and sacrifices gave Brahmans undue power. This power has been challenged, occasionally defied, but never overthrown. Brahmans are not merely the representatives of the gods, they are themselves divine. I myself have seen a man of high position bow before a Brahman and wash his feet. Men, however, arose who, without contesting the Brahmans' right to regulate worship and dominate worldly affairs, insisted on freedom of thought. In India philosophy and religion are identified, even medicine and music, astronomy and grammar, come within the realm of religion.

The *Upanishads* contain the metaphysical speculations of some early (and later) thinkers, and indicate the keenness and freedom of their thought. The speculations are directed largely to the nature of the divine and its relation to the universe, human destiny also is considered and ideals of life evolved. The implications for life which these philosophers work out are mainly for themselves and their immediate followers, there is no passionate concern for the uplift of the masses, no effort to sweep away the crudities of idolatry, and to establish a reign of righteousness. Intellectualism predominates over spiritual devotion and practical religion. Somehow the leading tenets of such teachings became somewhat widely disseminated, and it is surprising to find how the uneducated are keenly interested in, and eager to discuss,

philosophical aspects of religious problems which possess small attraction for the man-in-the-street in England.

Some two thousand four hundred years ago arose Gautama Buddha. Buddhism cannot be discussed but must be noticed. In greatly modified forms it numbers as its adherents probably nearly a third of the human race, but it is practically extinct in India proper.

Buddha was a *very* great man, not as a thinker but as a saint and practical reformer. Buddhism sprang up from Hinduism, and has profoundly affected the Hinduism of later times. It aimed at quenching the desire to live and to enjoy, forasmuch as all experience involves pain, and encouraged a pure and unselfish life. The goal was Nirvana—the cessation of volition and consciousness, if not of existence. Philosophically Buddhism was related to the Sánkhya system. Its doctrines of Transmigration and Karma it possesses in common with Hinduism. It may be well to touch on these here.

We in the West are in danger of missing the real significance of Transmigration. Our conceptions are conditioned by our estimate of the value of personality and individuality. To the Indian thinker these are of no moment, they are human weaknesses; not realities to be cherished but delusions to be overcome. Personality is, however, such a supreme reality that it abides as a feeling when belittled in the domain of thought.

We regard transmigration as the successive lives of the same person, Indians regard the matter differently. According to the higher Hinduism the true centre of our life is not an 'ego' but an immaterial force associated with the 'ego.' At death this immaterial force, modified by the birth-to-death experience, and influenced by association with the ego, passes along on its course, becoming the nucleus of a new life; the ego with which it was associated has ceased to be, another ego comes into being to become its associate for the next stage of the journey. Thus the subject of the transmigration is not the person, it is an impersonal something evolved as the result of the birth-to-death experience. This resultant becomes the centre of the next stage in the *sansara*, the ages-long wandering. The ego is the great delusion, deliverance from which is

salvation. Submersion in the universal Self is the great consummation. The unconscious universal Self is God, the One; the individual 'I am' is the great lie, escape from which is to be sought.

I am aware that not even all Hindus would accept this as a true presentation of their position. Views differ widely and are not consistently held. One section of the Vedantists maintains the reality of eternal spirits as distinct from God, though existing *in* Him.

Etymologically *Karma* means 'a work,' but the term is specifically applied to the sum total of human activities and the results which are entailed. The result of a past life becomes the seed of a new life experience. Karma regulates this age-long process, it secures the relentless relation between sowing and reaping.

Two only of the philosophical systems can be noticed. The Sánkhya is dualistic and atheistic. Matter and spirits are the two eternal realities, for God there is no place. Spirits are self-existing, the world process works itself out without creator or director.

Vedántism (the prevailing philosophy in India) has three principal forms. 1. The *Advaita* of Sankara, an unflinching Monism. 2. The *Vishistádvaita* of Rámánuja, a modified Monism; Rámánuja compromises, maintaining the existence and reality of spirits besides God, but they are through and in Him. 3. The *Dvaita* of Mádhava, a more thorough-going Dualism than that of Rámánuja.

With Sankara there is no attempt at compromise, it is Monism of a very extreme type that he teaches. One thing alone exists,—God, there is nothing else. He is the 'all': the 'all' of the ordinary pantheist,—the universe, men, spirits, —does not exist at all, it only seems to be. This delusion springs from *Maya* or *Avidya*. What this *Maya* is, whence, how it came to be, how it conjured up this imaginary universe, who can say? If God alone is, how can *Maya* exist? Some candid Vedantists, while maintaining that *Maya* both *is* and *is not*, allow that they are in a tight corner.

Pantheism, vague, crude, is widely current in India, but Vedantism is not Pantheism, it is *Theopantism*, not the 'all'

is God, but God is the 'all.' That which most men call the 'all' is not in existence, it is mere illusion.

Salvation is by knowledge, the knowledge that God alone exists. We, our sorrows and our joys, are but a dream, a dream without a dreamer. So far as we are anything we are God, so far as we are not God we are nothing. Salvation is the leap from the delusive consciousness of personality into the ocean of unconscious being. The knowledge may come now, the *full* salvation comes at death; until then the man is haunted by the spectre of personal experience though he now knows that it is only the dream of a person who does not exist.

We may naturally be tempted to ask if such a severe monism is actually thinkable or livable. The Lord be praised for men's inconsistencies. Logic is relentless, but there is in life something deeper and stronger than logic. Many Vedantists are delightfully human. They may be indifferent to material wealth, endure the 'slings and arrows of outrageous fortune' with wondrous patience, subdue fleshly appetites, and yet abound in the sweet humanities. They may deny the reality of their personality and yet be charming persons.

The Hinduism of the masses differs greatly from all this. Among the more than two hundred millions of Hindus are included over fifty or sixty millions who are only grudgingly accepted as Hindus by the rest. Their religion is Animism drifting towards Hinduism. Animism and Hinduism overlap each other, no definite boundary can be drawn. Even among the highly educated, Hindu rites are generally observed, and Brahman priests officiate at the numerous family ceremonies. Idolatrous practices are by no means excluded from their lives. In times of stress, at the festivals, and on other occasions, they resort to idolatrous rites and are, apparently, not tortured by their crudity, nor condemned in conscience for partaking in them.

Throughout India idolatry is rampant. Take Benares as an outstanding example, it is full of temples, there cannot be less than twenty-five thousand idols in the city, probably far more.

The apologist's plea that the idols are not regarded as gods but merely symbols is simply charitable nonsense. Were this so, of what could the ugly, often obscene, idols be symbolic? Again, the stories of the gods represented are often foolish and immoral. It may be asked,—Can Hindus, who are so intelligent, believe that these idols are actual gods? Yes, they can and do. Bear in mind that the Rs.25 idol, carved it may be by a man they knew, was consecrated with ceremonies which possibly cost Rs.25,000; it was then that the image became a god. Everything is done to support the belief that divine power dwells in the idols. May I add that I firmly believe that many of the people possess a genuine spirit of worship, and exercise it, not, however, because of the idols but in spite of them.

The idolatry at some places is worse than that of others. Kálighát, and Maturá and Brindában are notorious for their iniquities. Some of the sects are guilty of indescribable abominations. Considering the superstitions, the gross idolatries, the immoral character of many of the gods worshipped, one wonders that the people are such as they are. As one remarked of a people under similar conditions, 'they are disappointingly good.' Christ was in India before any Missionary Society had occupied the field. In spite of the obstacles and pitfalls of Hinduism, many of the people are genuinely religious, and manifest virtues and graces frequently missing among other peoples who enjoy fuller light.

The *Bhakti* movements probably originated in South India in very early times, they have spread widely and assumed multifarious forms. *Bhakti* may be taken to mean, *intense love for, and trust in, the object worshipped.* Sir George Grierson and others are disposed to think that the early Christianity of South India may have given impetus to these movements and possibly influenced their trend. This appears to be reasonable. This is not urged with any apologetic motive. Were the *Bhakti* movements purely spontaneous they do not suggest that Christianity is not needed; they only prove that man is athirst for the living God, the movements cannot quench the thirst, only Jesus Christ can do that.

Hinduism has endeavoured to meet the yearning for a

personal God by the stories of divine incarnations. Individual idols are also offered as objects for personal devotion. Hopeful movements have gathered around *Ram*, an incarnation of Vishnu, and they have exercised a purifying and uplifting influence. The worship associated with the Krishna incarnation have often proved morally disastrous. In some cases, such as the poetess *Mirabai* and *Tukaram*, devout souls have soared above the objects which they professed to worship.

Among the Bhakti sects worship is frequently rendered to the founder of the sect, or to the guru, or teacher, yet it remains true that the movements have been fruitful in saving multitudes from the mere inanities of idol worship and senseless and cruel rites.

Modern Reform Movements demand a paper to themselves. The Bráhma Samáj was largely inspired by Christianity. Keshab Chandra Sen, one of its most influential leaders, all but confessed himself a Christian, but drew back and assumed to himself something like a position of divinely inspired director of a new church.

The *Prarthna Samaj*, on the Bombay side, is an offspring of the Bráhma Samáj, but is quite independent, and has been greatly quickened by the influence of Christianity. Its efforts on behalf of the depressed classes are most commendable.

The *Arya Samaj* is distinctly anti-Christian, but has adopted many Christian methods. Its cry is 'back to the Vedas,' which it interprets in a very arbitrary manner. It endeavours to strip Hinduism of later accretions and corruptions.

The *Deva Samaj* is a reform movement, endeavouring to dispense with any god or gods.

The *Radha Swami* sect works along lines in which pseudo-science, theosophy and mysticism are weirdly blended. It has enjoyed the leadership of some able and earnest men.

Concerning the very important subject of caste only a few sentences can be given. Caste is founded on a lie and on a truth. The lie is that members of different castes belong to different orders of being, eternally distinct; the truth is that all men are not equal, and are differentiated from one another. The curse of caste is that birth is made the test of

worth. Pride and tyranny are fostered and the rise of members of the lower castes made impossible. Caste is not an unmixed evil, there are phases of it which stand out in refreshing contrast with the principle sometimes adopted in the West, 'Every man for himself and the devil take the hindermost.'

Many important matters must pass unnoticed. I can only, in conclusion, offer a few words on the 'potentiality' and the 'actual working of' Hinduism.

Three points demand special notice. 1. The possibilities of a religion must not be gauged by the attainments of its professors. Some never give their religion a genuine trial, others may reach a high level of life not due to the religion they profess, but to the working of God's spirit, either directly or through other channels. 2. In comparing two religions we may not select the saintliest followers from the one and the foulest from the other. The fair thing to do is to take the lives of such as are rendering a fair measure of loyalty to the creed they adopt. 3. There are various presentations of Hinduism as there are of Christianity.

The higher Hinduism is generally too purely intellectual, deeply concerned with metaphysical speculations, and laying undue stress on meditation and contemplation. Terrified by the bogey of anthropomorphism, it has failed to discover that God is a personal, gracious, loving Father, that man is most nearly divine when most perfectly human, and that there is much that is truly human in the divine. Generally speaking, the most devout Hindus are not sufficiently exercised about undertaking a ministry of enlightenment and help for the neglected and the outcast. The true place is not given to ethics in theology and ideals of life. Spirituality is too closely identified with abstract thought, too little with personal relations and social responsibilites. There is the need for the re-enthronement of personality in all its widest reaches of meaning.

The Hinduism of the people is too external. Its gods are gross and incapable of inspiring the worshippers with lofty ideals. The Bhakti movements afford some redeeming features, but the teachers have no Divine Saviour to proclaim, able to verify in experience the truth of His promise, 'Come

unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest.'

The working out of Hinduism has resulted in unrest, confusion and bitterness; it has supported social wrongs and the degradation of womanhood, and justified tyrannies. To appreciate the situation it is very important to distinguish between Hindus and Hinduism. Hindus are commonly, courteous and gracious souls, and in their religious life manifest far finer results than a study of Hinduism would lead one to expect. One is disposed to say that, speaking broadly, Hindus are often about as much in advance of the Hinduism they profess as are nominal Christians behind the Christianity which they are supposed to obey. My deep conviction is that Indians have an essentially religious nature, with aspirations and longings which Jesus Christ alone can satisfy.

TO LOVE GOD WITH THE MIND*

'And one of the scribes came, and heard them questioning together, and knowing that He had answered them well, asked Him, What commandment is the first of all? Jesus answered, The first is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. The second is this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'—St. Mark xii. 28-31.

THE account of this interview between the scribe and our Lord is found in the first three Gospels. If you compare these accounts you will find that they diverge from each other in two distinct directions. The first main divergence consists in the fact that, whereas Matthew and Mark assign the two chief commandments of loving God and of loving our neighbour to Christ, Luke assigns them to the scribe. With this fundamental divergence we need not deal here. It does not affect our present purpose; for whether Luke is right or wrong in attributing these two commandments to the scribe, Christ

* A sermon preached by the Archdeacon of Westminster (the Ven. R. H. Charles, D.D.) on Sunday, August 27, in St. Mary's, Oxford, before the Conference of Modern Churchmen, by the kind permission of the Vicar, the Rev. C. A. Whittuck.

attaches to them the imprimatur of His own authority in the words, 'Thou hast answered well, this do and thou shalt live.'

But with the second divergence we must deal, since it is relevant to our subject—namely, the duty of loving God with the mind. This divergence is not between the first two Gospels and the third as before, but between the second and third Gospels and the first. Now in Mark and Luke we find the commandment given thus, 'That thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind and with all thy strength.'[1] But if we turn to the first Gospel, only three of these four clauses are given. Matthew omits 'and with all thy strength.' The question before us is not a merely academical one. The variations are significant and need to be studied in order to recover the original form and meaning of the words. And that we can recover the original form there is no reasonable ground for doubt. The first step in our quest is taken when we recognise that the words of our text, 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind and with all thy strength,' are a direct quotation from Deut. vi. 4-5. That these words were familiar to every Jew is a well attested fact. According to Josephus[2] they were repeated by every faithful member of the Jewish community twice a day in the first century of the Christian era. The words in our text, therefore, so far as they relate to the duty of loving God, should be an accurate reproduction of the original text in Deut. vi. 4-5. But as a matter of fact they are not a correct reproduction. In Deuteronomy the text reads, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy strength,'[3] How comes it, then, that Mark and Luke, when quoting this passage, insert among these three phrases a fourth—namely, 'and with all thy mind'? To the Hebrew scholar there is no difficulty whatever here. He recognises that the two phrases in Mark and Luke—namely, 'with all thy heart' and 'with all thy mind' are simply two independent and alternative renderings of one

[1] The order of the last two clauses is reversed in Luke.

[2] Josephus, *Ant.* iv. 8. 13.

[3] These three phrases, 'with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength,' are repeated in 2 Kings xxiii. 25.

and the same Hebrew phrase in Deuteronomy.[4] Thus the three phrases in Deuteronomy are expanded into four in Mark and Luke by the inclusion of duplicate renderings of one and the same Hebrew phrase. The first rendering, 'with all thy heart,' reproduces the Hebrew word for word. It is a literal, but not an idiomatic rendering of the Hebrew; for according to the Hebrews the heart was the seat of the intellect or mind.[5] To the Hebrews a heartless man was a brainless man. Hence the second and later[6] rendering in our text, 'with all thy mind,' is an idiomatic and good rendering. This second rendering stood at first most probably in the margin of Mark or Q as an alternative rendering, and was subsequently incorporated by a later scribe into the text. To recover, then, the original form of these words, which, as I have already said, were familiar to every Jew, we have only to omit one of the alternative renderings.[7] We may omit 'with all thy mind,' and retain 'with all thy heart,' if we are careful to remember that the latter phrase has exactly the same meaning as the former. The traditional text, therefore, both in Mark and Luke is quite secondary. We have to get behind it in order to recover the original words of our Lord. But in Matt. xxii, 37, the text is still worse.[8] It reads, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind.' Now no Jew—not to

[4] In Deut. vi. 5 the LXX has the second of these renderings ἐξ ὅλης τῆς διανοίας σου, whereas in 2 Kings xxiii. 25 we have ἐν ὅλῃ καρδίᾳ αὐτοῦ. The Hebrew in Deuteronomy is בכל לבבך and similarly in 2 Kings save for a change of suffix.

[5] The Hebrew לבב is rendered by διανοίας in the LXX of Deut. vi. 5. נפש was never so rendered.

[6] Jeremiah (v. 21) speaks of Israel 'as a foolish people and without understanding' where 'understanding' is a translation of the Hebrew word for 'heart.' *Cf.* Hos. vii. 11; Job xii. 24.

[7] The text in Mark xii. 33 is very uncertain. It appears in MSS. and Versions in at least four different forms—sure evidence of text corruption. With the chief Uncials Westcott and Hort read ἐξ ὅλης καρδίας καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς συνέσεως καὶ ἐξ ὅλης τῆς ἰσχύος. But for συνέσεως D and some early Latin MSS. read δυνάμεως, while the Syr. (Cur. and Sin.) reads ψυχῆς αὐτοῦ. This verse seems to have been recast after the incorporation of the duplicate rendering in xii. 30.

[8] Not so in the ancient Syriac Versions (Curetonian and Sinaitic), which here agree exactly with the Hebrew. They are not based, as Burkitt says (*Evangelion da Mepharreshe*, I. 134, n.), on the Syriac of Deut. vi. 5. They agree, however, with the Syriac of 2 Kings xxviii. 25. The Latin *Codex Germanensis* gives only two clauses: 'in toto corde tuo et in tota anima tua.'

mention our Lord or the scribe in question—could ever have reproduced so inaccurately the great commandment from Deuteronomy. For Matthew omits the third clause in Deuteronomy, 'with all thy strength,' and in agreement with Mark and Luke combines the two independent translations of the first clause.

Our subject, therefore, is to deal shortly with the great commandment of the Old Testament, a commandment which is repeated and reinforced with the authority of our Lord in the New Testament, and this commandment is, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy strength.' This first great commandment we might translate more or less accurately in a modern form as follows: 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind and with all thy affections and with all thy will.'

As regards the first requirement, and to this requirement we must confine our attention in the main this morning, there is no doubt that it has to do with the mind, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind.' Even the Greek translators so translated the Hebrew of Deuteronomy two hundred and fifty years before Christ. The mind, then, is to find its full expression in our love to God. Now what does this mean? It means clearly this: that God asks us to use our minds on our religious beliefs and conduct, and not only on our religious beliefs and conduct, but also on all His works so far as they come within our ken. For the worlds of thought and science have made indispensable contributions to our theology, and will no doubt make many more. To mental, moral, and natural science, to Biblical and historical research and criticism, we are indebted for the chief advances made by theology during the last three centuries. Had there been no such contributions of the mind to religion, we should now most probably have a shrunken, narrow, and fanatical Church, worshipping a being whom it would be wrong to imitate, a god whom none but the most irrational of his devotees could stoop to love. Where piety is not stifled by forms and the Divine light is not eclipsed through the traditions of men, it is owing to the right use of the mind in religious questions. Obscurantist views of the Old and New Testaments made it impossible for the best scientists

of the last generation to be members of the Christian Church. It is true that even in that generation there were great scientists who were also Christians, like Faraday and others, but such men could only maintain their allegiance to their narrow conceptions of Christianity by keeping their theological and scientific beliefs in separate watertight compartments. But happily that evil period is past when religion and science were thought to be antagonistic to each other. Science was, and is, antagonistic to bad theology, but true science was never antagonistic to true religion. Even nowadays there are multitudes of men who shrink from applying their minds to their religious beliefs lest they should be disturbed regarding them, or even be forced to disown them. Surely the creed that cannot bear investigation is in a perilous condition, and can never be a source of strength to a man in the hour when he needs it most. Such a man fears to think lest he should cease to believe. There are, it is true, certain beliefs in some or all of the Christian Churches that cannot but give just cause for such misgiving and distrust. But these beliefs are mainly the traditions of the elders, survivals from the dark ages. What we suffer from is the lack of thorough and fearless investigation. The more men learn to know Christ, the more irresistibly are they attracted to Him as verily and indeed man, but also as the unique and eternal Son of God. And through Christ men learn to know and love God as their Father, and they love Him best who seek to know Him with all their powers.

There are, no doubt, ignorant men who in truth, purity, and goodness reflect wondrously the life of Christ, and in their humility enjoy the unbroken sunshine of His Presence. And yet none the less their ignorance detracts inevitably from their sainthood. For how frequently do ignorant saints, unconscious of their limitations, congratulate themselves on their freedom from all doubt. But this freedom from doubt, unless it is won in spiritual and intellectual strife, is generally the mark of an inferior and limited intelligence. Faith, if it is living, is ever advancing in its ideals, spiritual, moral and intellectual. If it strives to be true to these, it is ever adventuring into the unknown and making the unknown henceforth in some measure part and parcel of its own possessions.

The ignorant saint, moreover, is not always a humble saint. Indeed, only too often dogmatism, intolerance, and fanaticism follow closely in the wake of ignorance. To most minds, therefore, learning and knowledge are helpful. For learning enables a man to get outside his own limited experience; it supplies him with ethical and spiritual standards transcending his highest attainment, it acquaints him with the goodness, the heroism and saintliness of men far more highly gifted and far more faithful to their ideals than he is to his own. In fact such knowledge cannot but humiliate every one of us alike morally and intellectually. But if learning is to be of this helpful nature it must not be fettered from without, it must be free to go whithersoever God summons it; and so it must often go forth, not knowing whither it goeth. Without such freedom learning is but a mere bundle of barren facts and traditions strung together by some artificial tie. And so such learning becomes the letter that killeth, not the spirit that giveth life. It confuses dogma with the essence of religion. For, as we are all aware, the theology of any particular period is nothing more than the intellectual expression of the religion of that period—if the religion of that period has the power of self-expression. It is changing and human, not permanent and Divine; it is at the best but things seen through a glass darkly, not truths as they shall be known more and more fully in the light of God's Presence. When learning is thus divorced from spiritual and intellectual liberty, it finds its main occupation in stereotyping the creeds and rituals of the past, whether of the patristic or later ages, as though these creeds and forms were unalterable, final and absolute; with its pretentious and arrogant erudition it would fashion God in the image of man—not transform man into the Image of God.

When a party within the Church has convinced itself that it possesses the truth final and absolute, the next step it takes as a rule is to persecute and defame those who are unable to agree with its own obscurantist views. Well it is, then, for the Church if those who withstand such obscurantism steadfastly hold their ground. Thoughtful and experienced souls must not abandon a great religion when it is battered and bruised by the storms of religious doubt, or when its spiritual

existence is threatened with obscurantism and stagnation, materialism and death. If men of enlightened views and Christian life were to forsake the Church when they recognised the obsolete nature of some of its formularies, then the untenable and antiquated elements would be further strengthened, and reformation made an impossible task. The secession or expulsion of all progressive minds would convert the Church into a stagnant fen, into an intensive breeding-ground for mental and moral degenerates. Unless these men abide in the Church, it cannot be saved.

No Church, therefore, can be truly Catholic which lays the chief emphasis on the acceptance of certain intellectual formulas. So far as it does so, it is essentially irreligious, and such a wrong emphasis must ultimately issue in the claim to infallibility, in the absolute identification of dogma and religion; in other words, in the identification of a temporary and partial expression of religion—and that often of its least valid expression—with religion itself. We live, when we live truly, by the present inspiration of God's spirit; our souls are guided and sustained by living truths. And such inspiration and guidance make each generation to a great extent a law unto itself. If it belongs to the true succession of the Saints, it will be ever advancing onward and upward.

Though our subject is the first phrase of the first and great commandment, I must touch briefly on its two last phrases—'With all thy soul and with all thy strength.' 'With all thy soul' may, for the present purpose, be taken to mean 'with all thy affections.' The religious emotions or affections must not waste themselves in self-indulgence. It is possible to possess these emotions and yet to have little or no sense of moral obligation, and to be all but destitute of the spiritual life. No one should congratulate himself on his religious raptures, unless these raptures are translated into right action. No right emotion is given to us by God to end in its own indulgence. If the generous affection, the sense of gratitude, the impulse of mercy and unselfishness, the aspirations reaching forth to the ideal life in God fail to lead us to undertake the spiritual tasks in which they were designed to find their fulfilment, then they are so much spiritual waste and serve only to corrupt the heart it was their sole purpose to enlarge and glorify.

Next as regards the words 'with all thy strength.' The essence of this command is to love God with the will. Hence it is the indispensable complement of the two commandments that precede it. We are to translate all the truths, the leadings and inspirations of God's Spirit into true and noble deeds, and make our lives transcripts of that of the Divine Master. We must address ourselves to all the tasks of life—its meanest as well as its most sublime—in the spirit of an obedience that subdues all things unto itself. Our daily life is our religion. If we would be faithful therein we must love God with all our will. Hence the will can never be neutral. It is perforce obliged to act, whether rightly or wrongly. For it is called upon from day to day, from hour to hour, to carry into the actual experience of life the truths that it has learnt apart from it. From the fulfilment of such tasks it can neither grant to itself nor receive from others any dispensation. He that seeks the blessedness of religion can never escape the burdens and duties that religion lays upon him, and if he fulfils these, even in a very inadequate degree, that blessedness will be given to him in the generous measure of the Master, pressed down, shaken together and running over.

One remark more, my brethren, before I close. Surely it is a fact of the most transcendent importance for the human race that the command that was issued to Israel fully seven hundred years before the Christian era, and was acknowledged by Israel as constituting the supreme requirement of their faith, was exactly the command singled out by our Lord as the first and great commandment for all mankind. And now, two thousand years later, we Churchmen should feel, perhaps more intensely than ever, the obligation of fulfilling the first and great commandment, the recognition and observance of which bind us in one brotherhood with all that is best in the faith of Israel and the direct teaching of our Lord—the first and great commandment in the order in which it is enunciated in the Old Testament and reinforced in the New, 'Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy mind and with all thy soul and with all thy strength.' So far as we fulfil this commandment we shall know the truth, and the truth shall make us free. Let us stand fast, therefore, in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and let us not again be entangled in any yoke of bondage.

THE OUTLOOK

By the Rev. J. C. Hardwick, M.A., Chaplain of Ripon Hall.

'He is not a God of the dead, but of the living.'—Matt. xxii, 32.

'THE opening of the second half of the nineteenth century found Western Europe in a mood like that in which men who have just been relieved of a load of anxiety, sit down to enjoy a hearty meal.'[1]

The revolutions of 1848, and the high hopes based upon them, had ended in failure and fiasco. The men who live on dreams had suffered a set-back; the generation belonged to those who live on facts. An epoch of settled political peace and solid commercial prosperity appeared to have set in. This complacent temper, which now seems so distant and so strange, had its counterpart in the intellectual sphere. The period witnessed the decline of philosophic idealism and the triumph of scientific materialism in Germany, and in England the development of Mr. Herbert Spencer's Naturalism.

From the point of view of religion, the results were depressing. On the one side a thoroughly materialistic and philistine secularism; on the other a dull, reactionary and somewhat uninspiring orthodoxy, frightened of science and therefore petulant. It was a religious twilight. Matthew Arnold, the poet of a quiet and chastened pessimism, contemplated with wistful resignation the passing of the old gods, and listened with a sigh to the 'melancholy long withdrawing roar' of the tide of faith. Swinburne, 'in mere truculent tone,' mocked, like Heine before him, at the dying gods.

Yet the scientific movement itself was destined to undermine these negations. Science passed from physics and biology to study the early life of man, his language, his primitive institutions, his mystic beliefs. These all were being recorded and explained. Religion, discredited as a creed, began to be explored as an anthropological and psychological phenomenon.

[1] Prof. C. H. Herford, *Some Approaches to Religion through Poetry*, in the *Rylands Library Bulletin* for July, 1922.

The religions of the East and of the North—the Vedas of India, the myths of Greece and Scandinavia—became daily more real to the inquirer. The birth and evolution of religion began to occupy the foreground of a purely scientific interest. The historic religions of man were studied with increasing psychological insight and spiritual sympathy. It was recognised that 'spiritual needs, like our own, had found expression in creeds and rituals which, though foreign, were not fundamentally different from our own.'

As one consequence of such researches, our generation in range of religious interest and in critical sympathy, far surpasses its predecessors; and we now understand religion in a sense in which the nineteenth century did not. As an example of this change we may contrast the attitudes of two poets, one of the Victorian epoch and one of our own. A. H. Clough, in visiting Rome, felt oppressed, like 'a tree buried under a ruin of brickwork.' Rome seemed

> 'Merely a marvellous mass of broken and castaway winepots.
> Ye Gods! what do I want with the rubbish of ages departed,
> Things that nature abhors, the experiments she has failed in?'

The modern Italian poet, D'Annunzio, on the other hand, visiting St. Peter's, and hearing Palestrina's music, cries in a different spirit (though he is as far from Catholic orthodoxy as Clough):

> 'How majestic the chant! From its large, long undulations
> Rises one clear voice with a melodious cry.
> The voice mourns, to the world a sorrow divine revealing;
> The voices quiver and sob, warm as it were with tears.'[2]

For the one poet Catholicism is a survival, an anachronism, a superstition; for the other its worship is eloquent with human joys and sorrows, yearnings and aspirations.

A similar contrast is provided by Samuel Butler's savage satire on Evangelical Christianity in *The Way of All Flesh*, and Mr. John Masefield's remarkable poem, *The Everlasting Mercy*. No one can read that poem without feeling that the writer understands evangelical religion—an act of sympathetic insight of which Butler, for all his brilliance, was incapable.

[2] I owe these quotations to Prof. C. H. Herford, *loc. cit.* The sermon is much indebted to his article.

The fervour of religious experience is described by Masefield with power and sympathy and reality:

> 'The democratic soul of Christianity has never been expressed in terms of more imaginative power and more penetrating truth,' writes Professor Herford, 'than in the words in which the converted sinner tells of the new vision which the Everlasting Mercy has brought him':
>
> 'I did not think, I did not strive,
> The deep peace burnt my me alive;
> The bolted door had broken in,
> I knew that I had done with sin.
> I knew that Christ had given me birth
> To brother all the souls on earth,
> And every bird and every beast
> Should share the crumbs broke at the feast.'

This new insight, created by a knowledge of human development, was intensified by a new knowledge of human motive and instinct. Psychology deepened our thought and widened our sympathy. Hence the extraordinary interest aroused in Western Europe by the work of the great Russian novelists, Tolstoy and Dostoievsky, who would not have been understood by either orthodox or secularist England of 1860. Dostoievsky's habitual matter may be crime and vice, and though as we know stories of these things can be made which hardly touch the surface of life, it is not so with him. Moreover, like Jesus, Dostoievsky cuts across all conventional classifications. 'He can make a murderer who is lovable, a harlot who is a saint, an "idiot" who is rich in the wisdom not of this world.' Nor is this in his case 'mere white-washing or shallow compromise.' It is understanding and knowledge—that insight which comes of love, 'that great teacher.'[3]

> 'Let not men's sin dishearten thee,' says Father Zossima in the most famous of Dostoievsky's novels; 'love a man even in his sin, for that love is a likeness of the divine love, and is the summit of love on earth. Love all God's creation . . . If thou love each thing thou wilt perceive the mystery of God in all.'

This new religious spirit which sometimes has taken the shape of a fervid and mystical love of humanity almost Franciscan in intensity, may be found also throughout the poems of Walt Whitman, who writes:

'I know that all men ever born are also my brothers, and the women my sisters and lovers,
And that a kelson of the creation is love.'

[3] The phrase is Richard Rolle's.

In the presence of a soldier who has died for liberty he cries:

'Young man, I think I know you—I think this face is the face of Christ himself,
Dead and divine and brother of all, and here again he lies.'

We might say of writers like Whitman that, like Mary Magdalene at the tomb, they have turned behind them and seen Jesus standing in the guise of a gardener. Our generation no longer seeks Him in the remote past, nor among the abstractions of theology, though the Scribes and Pharisees have sought to imprison Him there, sealing up the tomb, making it fast, and even setting a guard. They no longer seek him in the unreal atmosphere of ecclesiastical pietism. We now know that if we would find Him we must cease to peer among the shadows of the sepulchre, and into the charnel house of theology where His timid friends have laid Him. If we find Him here at all, it will be a corpse only that will meet our eyes. Our generation looks for him rather in the experiences of life—in the street, in the school, in the workshop, in the hospital, in crowded and noisy places. The Son of Man is to be found amongst the sons of men.

Thus we are in the presence of a rather remarkable change of attitude which has developed during the past generation. A change which is the result, in a great measure, of progress in anthropological and psychological science, and which has already extended so as to affect circles far wider than those usually considered scientific. It is reflected in contemporary tastes in poetry and romance.

This change of attitude has its encouraging and its dangerous aspects. It is encouraging because people are now more ready to discover truth and value where they were hitherto rather blind to the existence of such things; and there exists a greater readiness to believe in religion and to hope for much help from it. We are no longer so certain or so optimistic about what has been called 'the non-religion of the future.' Yet the new orientation is at the same time involved in some perils, because people are now ready to tolerate, and even to practise and praise, things they no longer believe in, and to be contented with anthropological and psychological justifications for what can only be termed superstitions. They have to a large extent lost

the old righteous horror of what Dr. Glover has called 'the dreadful touch of superstition.' The attitude of D'Annunzio, who can appreciate and fall under the spell of Catholic worship while no longer believing in Catholicism, or of John Masefield, who can present us with a moving picture of evangelical religious experience, though one can hardly suspect him of believing in the old evangelical theology, is not completely satisfactory. There exists a widespread tendency to apply the test of emotional appeal rather than the test of rationality in the religious sphere. Yet all the while, however important the emotional aspects of religion may be, it is dangerous to forget that the appeal to history and to reason cannot be evaded, and that a theology based on false history or imperfect reasoning is an insecure foundation for a Church. The lie in the soul, while merely uncomfortable for an individual, is fatal to an institution.

It cannot be said that apologists for Traditionalism have successfully resisted the temptation to exploit the new anthropological and psychological knowledge in the interests of reaction; a policy which is by no means a safe one for those who follow it. It is true that the sciences of to-day—psychological, biological and even physical—have abandoned the materialistic and anti-religious bias which characterized the sciences of a generation or two ago; but we need not imagine on that account that we stand where our grandfathers stood, for the position is very different.

The situation, then, is encouraging, though not free from peril. And we shall best avoid its dangers by facing facts and by keeping as undefiled as possible our sense of truth. It seems to be the case that institutional Christianity, if rightly guided, has a great future before it. A sympathetic attitude towards religion, and even a convinced enthusiasm for the Christian way of life, exists and is extending among many of the more cultured Europeans, and will gradually permeate, we may hope, into those wider circles of public opinion which are still more or less obsessed with nineteenth century superstitions about religion.

'There is no power on earth,' wrote one who tried to do for the Roman Church what we should be attempting to do for our own,

> 'that surpasses or equals that of the clergy when they are imbued with the genius of a nation, and guide it faithfully in its natural progress according to the laws that direct the procession of its life.'

Lamennais' *Words of a Believer* was condemned by the Pope as a work 'small in size but great in depravity,' yet this utterance remains true. If people felt there were strong reasons for believing that the Churches had both the goodwill to help them and the necessary knowledge, psychological and otherwise, to enable them to do so, we should quickly see a strong revival of interest in institutional Christianity.

It was Jeremy Bentham, not usually regarded as a sentimental idealist, who said:

> 'If you want to win mankind, you must make them think you love them, and the best way to make them think you love them is to love them in reality.'[4]

And he might have added that if you want to win men's respect and allegiance, you must make them think you know what is best for them, and the best way to make them think so is actually to know (and not only imagine or claim that you know) what is best for them.

The Churches, then, need both love and knowledge. Love of humanity and knowledge of what is good for humanity and of the means how to procure it. Love without knowledge is useless, and *vice versa.* Mere well-intentioned humanitarianism, and invertebrate idealism not based on facts may serve a purpose—until it is found out. Then the prophesier of smooth things, the shallow hedonist, is repudiated, and men cast that kind of salt out on to the dung-hill. Yet without love, even knowledge is useless. A selfish Church, had it the most adequate theology in the world, and the most elaborate organization, would miserably, and deservedly, fail. For men, though they use and value knowledge, are moved by love. As Amiel says:

> 'It is not to the clever folk, nor even to the scientific folk, that the empire over souls belongs, but to those who impress us as having conquered nature by grace, as having passed through the burning bush, and as speaking, not the language of human wisdom, but that of the divine will. In religious matters it is holiness which gives authority; it is love, or the power of devotion and sacrifice, which goes to the heart—which moves and persuades.'

[4] Quoted by John Morley, *Politics and History,* p. 27.

We are nowadays in a position to understand and accept the saying of William Blake—that strange product of a century incapable of understanding him:

> Man must and will have some religion.'[5]

'[Nothing is] more improbable than that there will be a new psychical or mental development leading to the decay or disappearance of the fundamental religous ideas which are to be found in one form or another among the vast majority of men,' says a competent authority.[6] The new sciences of anthropology and psychology have taught us this much. And if institutional Christianity could be inspired somehow (1) with a Franciscan love of humanity, together with (2) a genuine zeal for truth, whether ethical and religious, or scientific and historical, we should see strange things, and amongst them a revival of religion and a new 'age of faith.' Some see signs of such an age approaching; but perhaps it has already come upon us, and 'the Lord is in this place and we knew it not.'

> 'We think that the Kingdom of Heaven, if there were such a thing,' writes Mr. Clutton Brock,[7] 'would come in the night and wake us all up. But the saying means that it comes while we remain asleep.'

Perhaps it may not be unduly presumptuous to suggest that our own movement is one of those signs of the times which the prudent may recognize. We ourselves may be playing our part in the building of the Jerusalem which shall be, when Christianity shall once again be the religion of Europe, and, through Europe, of the world.

[5] Quoted by Mr. G. G. Coulton, *Christ, St. Francis, and To-day*, p. 9.
[6] Mr. Stanley A. Cook, *Foundations of Religion*, p. 13.
[7] *Studies in Christianity*, p. 136.